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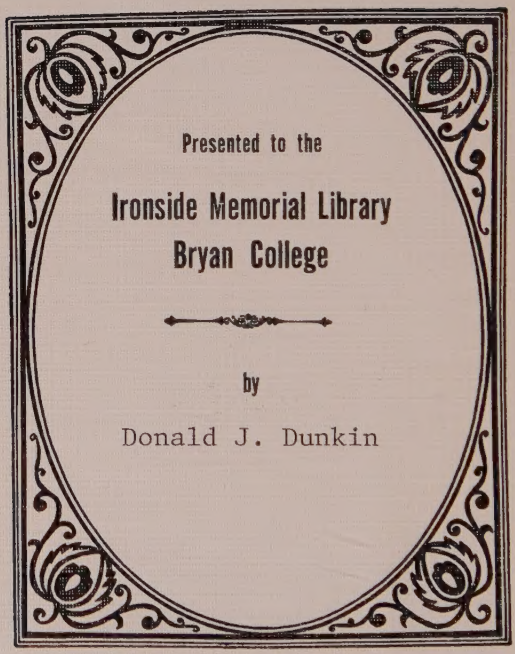

BRYAN COLLEGE
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THE LIFE IN CHRIST

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PREFACE

THE sermons contained in this volume have been preached upon many and varied occasions. Many of them have been put into manuscript form from brief or copious notes made when the sermons were first preached. This will explain in part the varying length of the sermons. A few of them are reproduced from the manuscript as prepared in the first instance. If the reader should find an occasional repetition of a thought or illustration it will be due to the fact that the sermons were preached upon many occasions and at various places. There are some evidences of an increasing demand for sermons in printed form. These are sent forth as a small contribution to the sermonic literature of the day, with the prayer that God will use them for the advancement of truth and righteousness among men.

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I

THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

Acts 2: 36—*"Let all the House of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified."*

THE experience of the disciples after the resurrection of Christ resulted in a very remarkable transformation. As we look upon them and listen to their words as recorded in the New Testament, we seem to be witnessing a work of creation. Something new in human history is being called into being, something new in individual experience, and something new in the social order arising out of it. Two things seem to move along in parallel lines in this new creation. First, the lordship of Jesus becomes more and more absolute, and parallel with this the triumphant might of the Christian church appears in growing splendour. The terms and descriptions which they now apply to Jesus show the former, while the conquest of disciples over environment shows the latter. They had during His earthly life called Jesus Messiah and Master and Lord. But these were conventional terms in current use which were without the fulness of meaning they acquired later. But now these men begin, in a new and original way, to define, or rather describe the lordship of Jesus. In the pentecostal powers of miracles and tongues and moral energy which fall like a shower of diamonds on the

early church, Peter sees the gift of Christ, the risen and ascended Lord. When men turn from their sins in vast numbers, it is because God had exalted Him to give repentance and remission of sins; and when the church comes into existence it is because Christ gave some to be apostles and some prophets and some teachers, on through the entire ministry and organization of the church. John on Patmos beholds Him in relation to the churches, and presents Him as walking among them with eyes like fire and face like the sun and feet like burnished brass. He sees Him in relation to earthly rulers, and He is the prince of the kings of the earth; and in relation to human history, and He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. Paul also sees Him in His great relations to the Universe, and He becomes the centre in which God sums up or brings to a head all things, or else He is the golden vessel capacious enough to contain the fulness of the divine. For in Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Thus did they fill out the circle of meaning of the earthly names of Christ. Thus did his Lordship orb itself into the one commanding fact of life and history. Thus did it become the centre which was strong enough in moral and spiritual gravitation to draw to itself and sustain the whole moral universe and impart to it order and system.

Such was one aspect of the new creation which took place after the Resurrection. The other aspect was that which answered to this, viz., the triumphant might of disciples themselves. The impression this makes upon us is that somehow these early believers had been seized by an irresistible power. One writer says that they were unconscious of the purpose working in them. All they knew was that an energy was at work, and

these were events which manifested that energy. But there was more than this in the events. It was not only a question of cause and manifestation; it was also an instance of means and end. Men are the instruments of a new power which seizes them and wields them mightily. They do not at first fully grasp the meaning but it slowly comes to them. It conquers Jerusalem which crucified Jesus, through its tremendous moral energy. It seizes a great mind capacious enough for a universal gospel in the person of Saul, the persecutor, and through him pours out upon the world a succession of glorious emancipating truths. This power sweeps around the Mediterranean and enters Rome, and finally it conquers Constantine, and the fiery cross which he saw in the heavens becomes the guiding principle of human history. In short, if human history be likened to a game of chess, for the first time, the men are so placed that we begin to discern the meaning of the game. If it be likened to the growth of an organism, we now see first the framework of bones emerging in the protoplasmic nucleus. If we liken history to the evolution of a solar system, we now see the central nucleus of the nebula throwing off masses which are to become planets and satellites.

Now the lordship of Jesus, coupled with this triumphant power of His Church, is the peculiar and distinctive truth of the early Christian history, and we cannot understand the lordship apart from the conquering church nor the conquering church apart from the lordship. I propose in this sermon to define a little more fully what the sources of Christ's lordship are and what the secret of the church's power, or more briefly what is the relationship between the lordship of Christ and the conquest of the world by the church.

I. We observe first the ground of Christ's lordship. We note then that He is Lord through divine appointment. "God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified." Now this implies a fitness which grows out of the nature of things. God's appointments are never arbitrary. He is Lord, then, not merely in name but in reality. If His function is that of Lord, His nature is a lordly one. If He has for us the value of God, His nature agrees with that value. You cannot have the effect and repudiate the cause. Alice in Wonderland saw the grin on the cat's face first and then saw the cat gradually fade away, leaving only the grin. This was in Wonderland, however, not in real life. If Christ works in a man repentance and faith and a regenerated life, if He performs the office of God for men, while remaining simply man, when and where and how did He wrest from God His functions and seize the reins of history? We can only tell what things are by what they do. It is impossible then to assert that Christ acts on history as God, but is destitute of the divine, as many moderns assert. You cannot separate function and nature. You do not infer, because gravitation makes water flow down hill that the nature of gravitation tends really to make water flow up hill.

Christ exercises lordship because He is Lord. He is Lord by God's appointment because He is essentially possessed of a lordly nature. Now, that fitness for lordship has shown itself in several other ways. For one thing, it is seen in Christ's successful affirmation of spiritual values and realities over against a materialistic age. The physical universe dwarfs man. The Psalmist felt that, and the modern world is incomparably vaster than that of the Psalmist. The earth is

a Bethlehem of the Universe, just a tiny village, and man its inhabitant. We must admit that, looked at externally, Shakespeare is insignificant compared with Orion. The Pleiades outshine the church in external splendour. The Milky Way makes all human history look like a tiny path which ants have made through a jungle. And yet, and yet, this is not all. Man is not dwarfed by the Milky Way. He refuses to be cowed by all the vastness around, and he steadfastly declines to be blinded by the dazzling splendours of all the systems.

Now, why is this? There is but one answer. It is the light Christ has shed upon human character and human value—the worth of the individual, the value of the soul. Man is a lost sheep; the shepherd will not rest until he finds it. Man is a lost coin and God is impoverished because he is lost, and He will, like the woman in the parable, sweep every nook and cranny of the universe in order to find the lost coin. Man is lost through sin and the Father waits for his return in age-long patience. The grave cannot conquer man. Personality is the supreme thing. Man is the diamond point on the golden pen of the universe. Christ's lordship is seen in His power to exalt personality to the supreme place against a universe even vaster than ours. Only Christ does this. Modern pantheism quenches personality. Unless there is a divine person behind all things, then our human personality is no more than a bubble on the bosom of the stream of time —an iridescent emptiness which gleams a moment in the sunlight and then vanishes forever.

Again, Christ's Lordship is seen in His steadily increasing power to control the moral progress of the race. Men are asserting that the ethics of Jesus have

been outgrown, that some of His teachings are antiquated. There is but one way to deny the finality of Christ's ethics, and that is by repudiating them altogether. Nietzsche frankly does this. Morals are bad for the race, he says. Now, if there be an ethics at all, the ethics of Jesus alone can control. For all ethical thought gravitates back to Him. Men superficially conclude that because you do not find in the New Testament express commands against trusts and boycotts, and particulars for all our modern complex life, its ethics, therefore, are outgrown. But the New Testament contains what is far better—the vitalizing principles for the ethics of all ages. The sunlight is as ancient as the universe and as modern as the foliage in your parks and the blossoms in your flower gardens. If you were to break a sunbeam into a thousand fragments, you would not find a single heliotrope or honeysuckle. But if you let the sunlight play on the planted seed, you get both. You do not go to the New Testament for the last decision of the Supreme Court or the last Act of Congress, but in many acts of legislation and decisions of the Supreme Court you get the outward expression of the moral teachings of Jesus.

Christ is lord also of the intellectual progress of the race, because His teaching as to God sums up all that philosophy has surmised and more. I cannot outline even the great thoughts of philosophy, but all of them are seen in Christ's teaching as to God the Father. Christ is the author of modern discontent in all its higher forms simply because He has given the vision of the eternal. Western civilization has been transformed into a stairway. Each epoch is a step upward. Our masterpieces no longer satisfy. We carve out our masterpieces with mallet and chisel from

the marble of history, and contemplate each for a time, and then the old discontent arises, and we put it on one side and begin on another. Our masterpieces then become the landmarks of our upward progress. Christ is the fleeing goal of history.

We observe, then, that the Lordship of Jesus is based on the eternal nature of things, and His church acquires power as it appreciates the meaning of this.

Jesus also controls the spiritual progress of the race. God hath made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified. Please observe where the emphasis falls: "this Jesus whom ye crucified." The apostle does not say God hath made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus who became incarnate, though this was true; nor this Jesus who preached the Sermon on the Mount, though this was true; nor this Jesus who wrought miracles, although this was an undoubted fact; nor this Jesus who was raised from the dead, though that is implied. He says rather "this Jesus whom ye crucified." The lordship of Jesus is based not primarily on what He taught or merely on what He was. It was first of all based on what He did. Not a teaching, but an event is the corner stone of His lordship.

Now His cross is not merely a moral spectacle to exhibit God's love and righteousness. It is rather a transaction which was grounded in some deep necessity. Just as a loving father might thrust his hand in the fire to rescue a child who had fallen into it, but would never call his children around and thrust his hand into the flames without cause merely to demonstrate his love, so Jesus did not yield Himself to the cross merely as a spectacle. Hence Christian experience has always looked to His sufferings as the centre of His work for man.

The death of Christ, then, was a moral transaction. As His cross was a moral and spiritual transaction with God and not merely a physical death, so His primary service to men is a spiritual transaction in their souls. Men do not reason their way up to Christ and then bow down to His lordship. They always meet Him in moral struggles of some kind or another. His lordship is first of all moral, not intellectual.

Matthew Arnold says, try all the ways of being good, and you will fail, but try the way of Jesus and you will succeed. Jesus has always met men in their struggles, and His lordship is based on the inevitableness and finality of His way of life. Here is a man desiring to cross a mountain who finds a number of paths leading up the mountain side. He tries one and it curves around again to the valley. He tries another, and it ends beneath a perpendicular wall of rock. He tries a third and it carries him to the brow of a precipice, a fourth and it leads him into a cavern. Finally he tries another which leads over the mountain. The authority of the one path over the others is that it leads over the mountain and the others do not. This is precisely the function of Jesus Christ in human life. All men alike need this final authority. We boast of our freedom, and we do well; but authority, lordship, is as fundamental a need as is freedom. We see it in Plato, that marvel of philosophical acumen, who after having explored the limits of human thought, longed for a God or a God-inspired man to lift the veil from his eyes and show him truth. We see it in Job when, tossed by doubt and fear, he longs for a daysman, a voice to speak to God for him and to speak to him for God. We see it in the men of the middle ages, who prayed and hoped that their

dead emperor, Frederick Barbarossa, would some day awake from his enchanted sleep in the cavern high up on the mountain side and come again to lead them to victory. We see it in Huxley, who longed for some moral power which might enter his spirit and compel it to think right thoughts and do right things. We see it again in Luther, who waged such a war against human authorities. Now he is in the Wartburg Castle, as prisoner, looking out at night upon the vast expanse of heaven with long trailing clouds sailing past, and asking what supports this vast frame and our human lives. Or when in his garden at nightfall a little bird alights on the branch of a tree for the night, and Luther sees and thinks of its frail body outlined against the infinite sky, and from it learns a lesson of trust. Or at another time, at the deathbed of his little daughter Margaret, he is resigned to her going, yet longing, oh! so deeply, to have her stay, yet following the little traveller out into the dim regions beyond with awe and wonder and humility, and finding in it all occasion for trust. So in all the deeper forms of human experience. In our temptations we want a stronger hand than our own which can tame the lions of passion in our breasts. In our highest intellectual flights, baffled and disappointed, we long for some higher power to rest our weary wings and enable us to penetrate the great beyond. In our sorrows and losses we need a voice which speaks with authority and can comfort us. With this thought in mind, then, we come to consider the authority of Christ in the light of human need and man's assertion of freedom.

II. We observe next the method of Christ's lordship, or how He exerts His lordship. And here we have a threefold paradox:

1. His authoritative revelations of truth are designed to become human discoveries of truth. The ascending mind of men is to meet the descending truth of revelation. He did not impose the doctrine of His supernatural person upon His disciples as a dogma to be subscribed to. His method was to let it dawn upon them until they discovered Him, as it were. He wanted them to have the joy and the resultant growth of spiritual discoverers. "Whom do men say that I am?" He said little of the doctrine of His vicarious death in the life on earth, but we do find the doctrine expounded in the epistles. He meant for the disciples to discover its meaning. We shall only gradually discover the inner meaning of some truths of His revelation. Meantime we accept them and go on exploring them. The doctrine of the Trinity will in time prove the real key to the Universe and to all philosophy. The ascending mind will understand the revelation.

2. The second paradox of Christ's authority is that He exerts His authority by making us free. He gives autonomy to all His slaves. What a winged word was that of the Reformation era, "the right of private judgment." When Luther started with this watchword, all the thrones of the world began to totter. Luther smote the throne of priest and king alike when he asserted man's right to think for himself in religion. Man said he was bringing on chaos and ruin. And so with this new watchword, "the right of private judgment," men subjected every institution to a new test. At length, under their sense of freedom and in their iconoclastic mood, after shattering all the sovereignties, they came back to Christ and exercised on Him their "right of private judgment." They lis-

tened to His words, and what did they say? "Never man spake as this man." They looked at His moral beauty, and they said, "He is the Chief among ten thousand." They followed His majestic form upward until they saw it losing itself in snowy grandeur in the depths of divine nature, and what did they say? "He was the effulgence of the Father's glory and the image of his substance." Thus in the exercise of their right of private judgment men gazed on Christ and deep down in their inmost souls they formed a new judgment. Then they gathered together again all the shattered fragments of the destroyed sovereignties of earth and welded and fused them together, and made of them another throne greater than any the world ever saw, and seated Christ upon it. Then they plaited and wove a crown made up of their thanksgiving and praise, their adoration and worship, their loyalty and eternal love, and they put the crown on His brow. That is what the right of private judgment did with Christ.

What a strange, glorious slavery is the slavery to Christ. It sent men leaping and singing to the stake. He put His iron chain on Edward Caswell, and he sang, "Jesus, the very thought of thee with sweetness fills my breast, but sweeter far thy face to see, and in thy presence rest." He put His chain on Samuel Stennett, and he sang "Majestic sweetness sits enthroned upon the Saviour's brow, his head with radiant glories crowned, his lips with grace o'erflow." He bound Richard Watson Gilder with His shackles, and Gilder wrote, "If Jesus is a man, and only a man, I say, of all Mankind I will cleave to him, and cleave to him alway. If Jesus Christ is God, and the only God, I swear I will follow him through heaven and hell, the

earth, the sea and the air." Thousands of Christ's slaves sit together in congregations all over the world and sing, "All hail the power of Jesus' name. Let angels prostrate fall. Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all."

3. The third paradox of Christ's authority is that, having subjected us to Himself, He makes us the medium of His own authority to the world. This is the marvel of it, the sense of subjection leaves us and a sense of authority and power comes over us. We are, as it were, assimilated to Him in His authority. His authority flows through us.

Now, this is the supreme need of the Kingdom of God, this intensified and deepened sense of Christ's authority in us. The pastor needs it to conquer his environment with spiritual forces. The pastor who leaves one field because it is hard and goes to another because it is easy needs to go back and study the spiritual alphabet. There are no easy fields. All fields are just new combinations of the old elements—the world, the flesh, and the devil. What the pastor needs is a new sense of spiritual authority and power.

The churches need this sense of Christ's lordship in order to do their great task. We need it for our missionary task. A little boy whose mother had taught him that God knows all things and that He loves all, saw in a missionary book a picture of heathen worshippers in India burning a human victim in sacrifice. He looked up and asked, "Mother, does God see this?" "Yes," was the reply. "Does He care?" "Yes," was the reply. "Why, then, does He not stop it?" Ah, that was the supreme and crucial question, and the missionary enterprise is the only answer to it. God's love is revealed through Christ, and the love of Christ

reaches mankind only as we embody it. He has no hands, or tongue, or feet on earth save ours.

We need this transferred lordship of Jesus for our social tasks. The whole of the great modern problem can be solved in and through Him alone. The Kingdom of God, which is the correlative to the lordship of Jesus, means justice in the economic world and righteousness in political life. It means the destruction of those piratical forms of business which knows no pity and gives no quarter. It means the end of the piteous cries of overworked and pale-faced children in factories. It means the abolition of the disease-breeding tenement and the death-infested sweatshop. It means ultimately the end of war. These are great tasks. But Chesterton is right when he says, "Jesus is a lion-tamer and has been a lion-tamer from the beginning." He did not set out to catch sparrows or subdue rabbits. He loves the great undertaking, and the chief difficulty has been that His people have been content to think in terms of conventional Christianity, comfortable and smug, without a sense of conquest or ambition for great things. As Ruskin puts it, "They have been content with the religion of the organ and the aisle, the twilight revival and vesper service, gas lighted and gas-inspired Christianity."

And this brings us back to our starting point with the New Testament Church. The vividness and reality of our sense of the lordship of Jesus will determine the power we possess to transform the world. The Kingdom of God will come when the lordship of Jesus is transferred to His people and they become lordly in moulding and guiding human progress.

II

ABUNDANT LIFE

John 10:10—*"I came that they may have life and that they may have it abundantly."*

THESE are the words of Jesus Christ to His disciples. He is the source of life to mankind. Through Him the world was made. All forms of life are His gift. In Him all living things consist, and Jesus is preëminently life to believers.

First of all, let us find a definition of life. What is life in the spiritual sense? Jesus declares, "This is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

Perhaps we may do well to consider the scientific definition of life. Science defines life as a correspondence between organism and environment. There is a living organism and around it is nature. There is an adjustment between the two. So long as the organism maintains this correspondence with its environment, life goes on. Death comes when the organism fails or the environment fails or when the correspondence between organism and environment is broken. The organ may be perfect, but if the necessary environment is not perfect, the organism dies, as when a

man suffocates when he is deprived of air; or, again, the environment may be perfect but the organism is defective; the organism may be perfect and the environment may be perfect, but the connection between the two is broken. The scientists are fond of pointing out that if we could find a perfect organism and a perfect environment and if the connection between the two could be preserved unbroken, we would have endless or eternal life.

Now the doctrine of Christianity is that Christ gives eternal life. If we retain the definition which we have set forth, this would mean that there is an organism which does not lose its power and there is an environment in which it is placed which does not fail and that there is a vital and enduring connection between the organism and the environment. In other words we may say that the soul regenerated by the grace of God is the spiritual organism. The environment of the regenerated soul is God Himself, and faith is the means of connection between the soul and its environment. Christ mediates to us eternal life through God. He establishes the connection between the soul and the Eternal One and through His grace that connection is maintained and eternal life becomes a fact for us.

In the second place, we may consider the cost of our life with Christ. The life comes to us freely. As Paul expresses it, "The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord." But there was infinite cost to Christ Himself, and we do not find the true measure of that cost until we get to the cross of Christ. The life of Jesus on earth we imitate. The teachings of Christ minister in many ways to our life. The life that dwells

in the heavenly Christ is the life which He poured out on the world. This life and this fulness of life He achieved as our Redeemer through His atoning death. The earthly Christ becomes glorified when we consider Him in the light of the heavenly Christ. The risen and glorified Christ passed through the gates of death and by virtue of the gift of His own life, the emptying of Himself, there comes to Him the supreme endowment of life for mankind.

It is this fact that makes the Cross so impressive. Jesus did not die the death of a martyr merely. It was this, but infinitely more. When in the Garden He lifted the cup of suffering and looked into its depths and recoiled from it and prayed three times that it might pass from Him, and when finally He pressed it to His lips and drained it dry, we are profoundly moved to the conviction that there was a deep and underlying necessity in His death; and again when on the Cross itself the cry went up from His lips, "My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken me?" The truth is borne in upon us that Jesus entered the region and shadow of death in a sense of which we cannot conceive. Some have said that Jesus had little to say about His atonement while on earth and that, therefore, He did not assign it a place of great importance. But Jesus came not to talk about but to make the atonement. He was about to render the greatest possible service to mankind and, as is fitting in those about to render such service, there was a becoming reticence in His words about it. He did foretell His death. He did declare that it was supremely necessary. He did declare that through it there was to come remission of sins, but the redeemed have never wearied of the theme and in the writings of

the Apostles we have much space devoted to His death and its meaning. The cost of our life, therefore, to Christ, the life giver, was more than any words of ours can express.

Let us note, in the third place, some of the manifestations of the abundant life which we have in Christ. I name several ways. For one thing, this life manifests itself in us by uniting us vitally with Christ. One of Paul's favourite figures is that of the human body with its many members, of which Christ is the head. In one notable passage the Apostle Paul declares that his life was ruled by the love of Christ. He says, "The love of Christ constraineth me." He makes the point clear by saying, "We thus judge that if one die for all therefore all died and we which live no longer live unto ourselves but unto him who for our sakes died and rose again." I think the Apostle has in mind here his favourite figure of Christ the head and His people the members of His body. There is a vital union between the two. The member shares the life of the head and the head shares the life of the member. The blood that flows through the head flows through the hand. There is an indissoluble union between the head and the members. I think, therefore, when the Apostle says "The love of Christ constraineth me" he does not mean "my love for Christ," for he knew that his love for Christ was too feeble a thing apart from something higher. On the other hand, I do not believe he meant to say "Christ's love for me," although this was certainly included in the higher truth. I think the Apostle rather meant that because of the vital union between himself, one of the members, and Christ, the head, he could say the divine life which Christ embodied, which dwelt in

Christ, dwells in me and constrains me. That divine compassion which was incarnated in the Saviour had become a part of Paul's life. Thus, it was his love to Christ combined with Christ's love for him in that higher principle of divine love which Christ embodied and poured into his own life as an Apostle and as a believer.

Again, the life which we derive from Christ manifests itself by growth and development. In one place Paul says that he counts all things to be loss "that I may know Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of mine own but a righteousness which is through faith in the Son of God." Paul uttered these words in his old age, after he had written some of his great epistles. He never wearied of gazing upon the Master. He was never satisfied with his knowledge. Looking upon Christ was like gazing upon the firmament. There were always new beauties and greater depths. The eye and the mind could never take it all in. This is the chief glory of Christ, His fascination for believers. We never fully compass Him. He is the goal which ever flees from us, although He dwells forever in us. We grow weary of things which we master. When we have mastered the contents of a book, it no longer interests us. We put it away on the shelf. When a man is working at an invention and completes it, he turns from that to something else. It is said of Edison that he spent years of devotion to the problem of producing the electric light but that when he had mastered it he would walk around a square to avoid passing one. I do not know whether this is true or not, but in any event, it is true to human nature. We turn away from the thing that we have mastered, but we can

never master Christ. In Him are eternal depths. The danger of the Christian is arrested development. There are stunted Christians who should be growing; little Christians who should be great Christians; feeble believers who ought to be rugged and strong. There is but one way to achieve that ideal life, and that is by clinging closely to the living Christ.

Again, our life in Christ manifests itself by the unfolding of the parts of our nature. No matter how brilliant our intellect, Christ will add lustre to it. No matter what our endowment of affection or genius in any form, Christ will bring forth in us ten-fold more of fruitage than we can ever know without Him. There are many lives which are failing because they have never grasped their own possibilities in and through Jesus Christ. If I were to hold in my hand a flower and I should ask a bee its view of the flower, perhaps it would answer by alighting on it and sucking sweetness from it. The bee's answer is "Life is a storehouse of sweet things." If I should ask a little child its opinion of the flower, it would probably say, "The flower is a plaything." If I should ask a scientific man, perhaps he would tear the flower into bits, analyze it into parts and give me a very learned and formal opinion as to the flower. If I should ask a poet, he might compose a beautiful verse about it and say the flower is the source of poetic inspiration. But if I should ask a devout Christian who knows the meaning of life in Jesus Christ, he would tell me that the flower is God's gift and that we do not reach its true meaning until we find in it a token of God's love. There are those who take the bee view of life. They use it for enjoyment. For them life is simply a storehouse of

sweet things. They become sensualists, devotees of pleasure. There are others who take the child's view. To them life is a plaything with no great meaning, and so we pass on up through the various conceptions of life to the highest. Life is God's gift. It is the expression of His love. In it our whole nature realizes itself.

Little do men and women dream of the unsuspected beauties of character in the depths of their own nature. We come to ourselves, we realize our personality when we accept the life which is in Christ. Miss Helen Gould, who recently married, was loved by all the nation. Why? Because she took the lofty view of life. She had wealth and social position and power and a thousand inducements to a life of pleasure and self indulgence, but she turned away from all of these and devoted herself to the service of others. To her, the best use of wealth and talent and opportunity was in seeking to lift up and serve those about her. I once read an interesting story of a man who was an unbeliever who desired a famous painter to paint a portrait of his wife, who was a Christian. He was especially anxious that the portrait should reproduce a certain expression which he sometimes caught upon the face of his beloved wife, but he could not describe the expression to his wife so that she could reproduce it, since it was unconscious to her; nor could he describe it to the painter in terms sufficiently definite for him to search for it while his subject was sitting before him. The painter was left, therefore, to experiment. He sought by various means to bring out the best expression upon her face. He spoke of travel and beautiful architecture, of mountains, of oceans, of poetry, of music, and many other inspiring themes.

He submitted several sketches to the waiting husband, but none of them contained the expression he so much desired. At length, the painter talked to the lady about Jesus Christ and His salvation, about God, the Father, and His love. These subjects called forth a new expression. He painted the portrait and submitted it to the husband, who exclaimed, "There! At last, you have it." This is a parable of life. Only Christ can call forth the most beautiful qualities of character in the facial expression. There are hidden deeps in all of us. Christ alone can explore them.

The life which we have in Christ manifests itself also in its power to transform other lives. This is the great power which Christ imparts. Some one has said concerning Jesus, "He has shown extraordinary power to transform bad men into good men. He has also shown extraordinary power to transform these good men into agents of redemption." He imparts to men some of His own power. The Christian who lives the true life in Christ is unconsciously transforming his surroundings. The touch of such a man causes the flowers of happiness to spring up in the lives of others. The presence of such a life dispels all shadows of sin and sorrow. The energy of such a life reenforces many a feeble will. Who would not have the life that is in Christ?

I cannot close this sermon without pointing out the alternative to the life in Christ. If we refuse that life, we shape our fate. For one thing, we shall die in our sins. Without Christ we shall never know the depths of our own nature. The jewels that are hidden there or which might be produced there will never come to light. Our nature will shrivel. It will grow smaller as life nears the end. It will degenerate. Life

abundant is ours for the asking. "Turn unto me and live" is Christ's word to the sinner. Turn unto Me and discover yourselves. Turn unto Me and find salvation and find the eternal life that is in God.

III

THE RESURRECTION LIFE OF THE BELIEVER

Col. 3: 1—*"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above."*

AS we read the New Testament, we find that there are three stages in the presentation of the idea of the resurrection. First, there is the proclamation of the great fact of the resurrection of Jesus. The early preaching was a preaching of Jesus and the resurrection. This corner stone of Christianity was made very prominent, and in the early chapters of the Book of Acts we find repeated emphasis put upon it. The next stage was the use of the resurrection of Christ as the pledge of Christianity for the resurrection of believers. Our bodies are to be raised because the body of Jesus was raised. The resurrection was the demonstration of the possibility of the resurrection of our bodies, and the New Testament writers, while ascribing it to the power of God, do not seek to explain it further.

A workman in the laboratory of the great Faraday knocked a silver vase into a vessel of acid. It was dissolved, and the workman was greatly distressed. Faraday put another kind of acid into the vessel, and the dissolved particles of the silver vase were precipitated in a mass at the bottom of the vessel. This

was taken out, and Faraday had it made into a more beautiful vase than the original. God is a great chemist who will gather together the particles and raise again the bodies of the dead in Christ. This does not mean the exact particles of the body that dies, but from the body which dies will come in some way the resurrection body.

The third stage in the New Testament idea of the resurrection was the declaration by the Apostle Paul that the present spiritual life of the Christian is a resurrection life. We have been spiritually raised from the dead. The quality of the life which we now have is the same in kind as that which we shall have in glory. The difference is one of degree. In the text the Apostle speaks of this resurrection life of the Christian.

I wish to call attention to a few marks of the resurrection life of the believer.

1. The resurrection life of the believer in Christ is a hidden life. The Apostle says: "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." This hidden life means that it is a secure life. We are in the hand of Christ, and Christ's hand is held in the great hand of God, the Father, and no one is able to pluck us out of His hand. As a hidden life, it is not easy for the outsider to understand it. The life of the bird that flies through the air is hidden to the fish that swims in the sea. It is a different kind of life, and hence unknown to the living creature in the water. The life of the Christian is a hidden life. The unbeliever cannot understand it, because he does not conform to the conditions necessary to an understanding of it. The Christian says to the outside world, "Come and see"; "taste and see that the Lord is good."

Sometimes it is objected that this is an unfair test. "Give us open demonstration—clear, convincing and compelling proof that the Christian life is true, and we will believe." This is what is said by non-Christians to Christians. But is it really an unfair test? Religious certainty can only be religiously conditioned, just as in other departments certain conditions are necessary to the kind of certainty required. Mathematical certainty is mathematically conditioned. Only the trained mathematician can see the force of a mathematical demonstration. Artistic judgment and artistic certainty are artistically conditioned. No one can give an assured conviction regarding a great painting who has not had his artistic faculties trained. It is not an unfair test in mathematics or art when we say that certainty in these departments must be conditioned mathematically and artistically, and it is not an unfair test when in religion we say that religious certainty is religiously conditioned. The hidden life, however, is open to any one who will approach it under proper conditions.

2. A second mark of the resurrection life of the believer is that it is an imperfectly manifested life. There is within the Christian more than he can express through his body, through his deeds, words and course of life. No singer is ever satisfied with his song, no player is ever satisfied with his music, no poet is ever satisfied with his poem, and no preacher is ever satisfied with his sermon. There is something greater within struggling for expression than anything which ever finds its way into visible or audible form. Our words are sown in corruption; they shall be raised in incorruption. Our deeds are sown in our weakness; they shall be raised in power. Christians groan and

travail in this life, not because they are overpowered by something greater than they, but because the life within them finds itself trammelled and hindered in its expression by the material world around it. It doth not yet appear what we shall be when this life which we now live shall be unfolded into its full reality.

I go to the muddy pond and look at a little shoot pushing up through the mud at the bottom, and I say to it, "Who and what are you?" and it replies, "It doth not yet appear what I shall be." I go back later, and it has grown taller, and I ask the same question, and it replies, "It doth not yet appear what I shall be." I repeat the question many times, with the same answer. But one day the little growing shoot in the darkness and mud of the pond reaches the surface, reaches the sun, and bursts open into the beauty of the pond lily, reflecting in its bosom the sun which it has been seeking all the time. Then, for the first time, we see what it was. Even so, the Christian can say at every stage of the present life, "It doth not yet appear what I shall be," but he is reaching upward toward the eternal, and one day he shall attain the complete image of Christ and burst into spiritual glory, and then will be fulfilled the saying, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with His likeness."

3. Again, the resurrection life of the believer is a gradually realized life. Not only is it hidden and imperfectly expressed, but it is also a progressive life. We sometimes forget this quality of the spiritual life. We want results quickly. We grow impatient with ourselves. We say we cannot wait for the slow unfolding of character, and yet all spiritual results, all high qualities are developed slowly. They planted

dynamite behind a ledge of rock in the Alps and sought to detach it from the mountain side. Time and again they exploded dynamite behind the ledge, but failed to detach it. Afterwards, when the débris had accumulated, an acorn fell into a crevice and sent its tender roots down between the rocks, and in a few years, as the young sapling grew, the ledge of rock was displaced and sent to the abyss below. The acorn succeeded where the dynamite had failed. It was the slow and steady pressure of life.

I teach students for the ministry. Some of them grow impatient in their preparation, and I have often said to them: When God builds a tree, it takes Him about three generations, but when he builds a squash, it takes Him about three weeks. A man can choose which he will be—a tree or a squash. We misjudge children, we misjudge church members, we misjudge the church itself, when we forget that the Christian life is progressively realized, that it comes slowly. I once saw in Pilgrim Hall at Plymouth, Mass., the restored ribs and keel of an old ship that was dug up from the sands of Cape Cod. They were worm-eaten and mouldy. As I gazed upon them I reflected that when the ship was building, hundreds of years ago, these ribs and this keel were in the same position. Then, however, it was a prophecy of a ship that was to be. When I saw it, it was a reminiscence of a ship that had been. The imperfect Christian is a prophecy, not a reminiscence. The imperfect church is a prophecy of the glorious church that is to be, not a reminiscence.

4. A fourth mark of the resurrection life of the believer is that it has a constant upward tendency. "If ye be risen with Christ, seek the things that are

above." The resurrection life directs the gaze heavenward. Robert Browning has a poem entitled, "An Epistle." In it, a young physician travelling in Palestine visits Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead. He observes Lazarus, who had been the other side of death, as he would observe another specimen of any kind, and writes back to his old instructor what he saw. Lazarus, he said, this man who had been dead and was alive, was not influenced by ordinary things like other people. He seemed to be following a golden thread which ran across the course of life pursued by other men. The coming of the Roman army did not terrify him as it did others; but an evil look upon the face of a little child telling of the activity of sin within would terrify him. He seemed to bring back from the other life a vision of the eternal.

I note, in the next place, some practical suggestions as to how the Christian may make the resurrection life real for himself. I would note, first, that it is to be by repeated acts of the will. The Apostle uses language which is exceedingly practical, in connection with the text. "Put off" the old man; "put on" the new man—these are the phrases which he employs. It is the figure of putting off one garment and putting on another. Put off anger, put off resentment, put off the revengeful spirit, put off impatience, put off the impure thought. Put on forgiveness, put on humility, put on love, put on all the graces of the spirit in each deed, each business transaction, each relationship in life. Do the right thing and the Christian thing. Let the will be girded; let it be directed toward the performance of each duty in turn.

This constant action of the will requires the re-

nunciation of forbidden things. We often forget the happiness that comes from renunciation. Many a man is trying to be rich who will never be rich. Many a man is trying to be famous who never will be famous. Many of us make a hard fight to make ourselves look young, when we would do well to renounce the effort and admit that we are growing old. Happiness through renunciation is a great principle of human life. The Christian has learned the secret, and joy fills his cup to the brim when he practises this great principle.

In addition to this activity of the will and this renunciation of forbidden things, the Christian is also to reckon himself alive unto God. He is not only dead to things that are wrong, but alive to the great things that are eternal. When a man yields himself up to this great ideal, when he counts his life as not belonging to himself but belonging to Christ, there enters into it the resurrection power. We do not fully appreciate the tremendous energy that is ours for Christian living because we do not lay hold of the mighty power that is available for us.

When Lovey Mary went to Niagara Falls, Mrs. Wiggs said to her: "Bring me a bottle of that Niagara water. I always did want to see what them falls looks like." We smile at Mrs. Wiggs, and yet many a Christian imagines that he has a conception of the resurrection power, the spiritual energy available for him, judging from the little phial of it which he has in his own life. Let him yield himself up completely to his Christian calling, and he discovers a mighty cataract of energy available to his hands. I suppose the Apostle Paul had in mind some such thought of the resurrection power when in one of his Epistles

he expressed the desire that he might attain unto resurrection from the dead. He did not doubt that he would be raised from the dead. He knew that his body would be raised up by the power of God. But he was thinking of the glory of the resurrection morning when the light of the eternal should shine upon his character. What he desired was that his moral and spiritual character should harmonize with the glories of that occasion, that he should be equal to it, level with it in attainment. His feeling was somewhat like the feeling of a bride preparing for the marriage ceremony. Her fingers tremble as she arranges her hair and her garments. Her heart beats more rapidly. She is full of anxiety, not because she doubts that in a little while she will stand before the altar, not that she doubts that the man she is to marry will take her by the hand. Her tremulousness is due rather to the fact that soon she is to be the observed of all observers. The light of a great occasion is to shine upon her as the centre, and what she desires is that she may be worthy of the occasion, arrayed in such manner as that all will recognize the agreement of her appearance with the splendour of the surroundings. Even so the Apostle thought of the glories of the resurrection life, and he sought daily to live the risen life, as all of us who are followers of the same Master should seek to live that life.

IV

CHRISTIANITY AND THE LAW OF SERVICE

Matthew 20:28—*"The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."*

IN Christ's teaching the emphasis fell on two chief points in regard to man. The first had to do with his relations to God. It has been remarked that Christ did not classify men educationally, as ignorant and learned; nor financially, as rich and poor; nor socially, as belonging to lower or higher classes; nor even morally, as good and bad, for the bad could become good if they would. Christ classified men religiously as believers or unbelievers. Thus He emphasized their relations to God. This is the primary thing in human character, faith.

The other point He emphasized was character as growing out of faith. What kind of life does your faith produce? Character has been defined as salvation if you think of it as deliverance from evil; or as redemption if you think of Christ's sufferings to secure it; or as heaven if you think of the inner blessedness which comes with it. But the best definition of character on its earthly side is service. For service implies a preceding salvation, and it can only be rendered in the Christian sense when the redemptive law of Christ operates in us and we are willing to suffer in order to serve. And service brings a foretaste of heaven.

Let us give our thoughts to Christ's law of service.

I. I call attention first to that law as it appears everywhere in Christ's teachings in the New Testament. The New Testament reverses the ordinary law of human happiness. Dr. Van Dyke says it is a mistake to suppose that happiness is bounded on the north by poverty, and on the east by obscurity, and on the west by simplicity, and on the south by servitude. This is a total misconception of the geography of happiness. Here is a better description and it is from the New Testament. Happiness is bounded on the north by lack of sympathy, on the east by isolation, on the west by self-assertiveness, and on the south by unwillingness to serve.

The New Testament reverses the ordinary law of human greatness. To be great was measured by the number of slaves or servants a man owned. Christ taught that greatness was measured by the number of fellow-men we can serve. Not the crown or sceptre was the measure of greatness. He that is least, he that is servant of all, shall be greatest, was Christ's word.

Christ taught that service is the real attitude towards evil. Several attitudes are possible as a man looks out on the evils of the world. He may become a pessimist and say it is all hopeless. Or he may become a revolutionist. But, says the New Testament, this is not the way to change the world. Revolution is only a temporary cure for the evils. You put down your Cæsar or Nero by revolution, and human nature will reassert itself and a new Cæsar or Nero will mount the throne and rule the world. You roll your stone of reform or revolution laboriously and painfully to the top of the hill and the law of gravitation makes

it slip from your grasp and down it goes to the bottom, and all your work is to be done over again. "It was a proof of the matchless greatness of Jesus that He stood three years in the presence of the Roman Empire and never struck it once," says Charles Jefferson. His business was to strike the human heart, and by striking the human heart He overturned the Roman Empire.

If you adopt the method of reform merely, then you will have to have a new reform for every evil.

No, says Jesus. Service is the Christian law for regenerating the world. In the parable of the talents we learn that use is the law of the Kingdom, and that disuse debars from the Kingdom. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus we learn that with the needy suffering at our gate we dare not live on in forgetfulness of his sores and poverty, on pain of being sent to the realm of anguish, which was built as the abode of the selfish. In the parable of the blighting and withering of the barren fig tree, we learn that there is not standing room in God's world for the unfruitful life.

In that lowly act of Jesus in the upper chamber we have the glorification of service. "Knowing that he came from God," says John, conscious of His pre-incarnate glory; and "knowing that he goeth to God," he adds, conscious of the glory which was to follow, Jesus took a basin of water and napkin and removed the sandals of the disciples and, according to oriental custom, bathed their dusty feet. This lowly act of service was a pearl to be strung on the same string with His pre-mundane and post-mundane glory. It was a pebble set in a frame-work of diamonds. It was as a clod between pillars of gold. It was as a piece

of charcoal surrounded by stars. To serve is to be like God. The text is the climax of the representation: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Nothing more can be said than this. No wonder the judgment of men will turn on the point of service. No wonder the New Testament insists that God elects men from before the foundation of the world, to service. We talk sometimes of the mysterious side of election, and there is a mysterious side. But one side is not mysterious. We are elected to become the incarnate love of God and purpose of God to redeem. God, in electing us to salvation, says, "I have elected you to be my lips to speak, to be my feet to go on errands, to be my hands to labour, to be my heart to love. I have no redeeming hands save yours, no redeeming feet save yours, no redeeming heart on earth save yours."

No wonder that judgment is made to hinge on service and that at the last day amid the flaming splendours of the last great assize the gates of Paradise fly open to those who were servants of their brethren. "When I was hungry ye gave me meat, when I was thirsty, ye gave me drink," these were the simple yet marvellously suggestive words of the Judge as He admits His own into the everlasting Kingdom.

II. Observe in the second place, then, that service is the touchstone of all human endeavour.

However vast the enterprise it will come to naught unless it conforms to the law of service. However lowly the deed it will not fail of reward if it is a deed of service. The pyramids of Egypt were built by kings to glorify themselves. A hundred thousand men were employed altogether and it took nearly half a century to build the large pyramids. Try to imagine

the toil and anguish of the slave driven by the master's lash to rear these piles of stone, with square base and triangular sides, four hundred and five hundred feet into the air. And for what? To serve as granaries? No. To serve as astronomical observatories? No. To serve as lighthouses? No. But to enclose the body of the Egyptian monarch when he died! What, then, is the judgment of human reason and of God? This, that they serve no adequate purpose. They cannot be linked into the world's civilization in any helpful way. They are monuments not of service, but of human pride. They are useless. They are barren fig trees.

There is another ancient structure in Athens, known as the Parthenon, erected by the Greeks in the age of Pericles as a temple. It is in every sense a worthy product of Greek architectural genius. Capable judges praise its incomparable beauty and grace and lament that the ravages of time have marred some of its lovely lines. In the British Museum, among its rarest art treasures, are pieces of statuary taken from this ancient temple. How useful this ancient structure. Formerly it was used for worship, and through the ages has been giving instruction and inspiring to higher things in art. The judgment of history on the Parthenon is that it served a useful end, and man would preserve its smallest part as long as possible.

Now these things are a parable. Mankind may be divided into two classes: Pyramid builders and Parthenon builders. There are little pyramids and great pyramids; little Parthenons and great Parthenons. But every human being builds one or the other with his life. The Parthenon represents the law of service, the pyramid represents human vanity and ambition.

What is your gift from God, your opportunity? I would say build a Parthenon with it. Miss Frances Ridley Havergal had a sweet voice. She resolved to sing nothing but religious songs with it, songs in praise of Christ. This I think was a mistaken and extreme view. For there are many other songs which minister and bless in their own way. But when Miss Havergal penned the prayer:

"Take my voice and let me sing
Ever only of my King,"

she declared in effect that she would cultivate her vocal gifts as a means of service.

Are you a teacher? Then build a Parthenon with your teaching, not a pyramid.

Public office is a public trust. Too often politicians and political parties use their opportunity to erect pyramids instead of Parthenons. Have you talent of any kind, wealth, position, influence? Remember that the call made upon you by the Gospel of Christ is that you use it to build a Parthenon. Serve.

A young man once told Phillips Brooks that he wanted to live a life original and great and asked for his advice. Mr. Brooks wrote on a piece of paper, folded it and handed it to the young man and told him to read it when he reached home. This is the advice he read: "Stand in the moonlight and cast a shadow." To cast a shadow is to do a different thing from others; is to be original, and it is a great thing to be original. The young man felt the rebuke to his pride and returned to Mr. Brooks for further advice, saying he wanted his life to be useful as well as original and great. Again the great preacher wrote on paper

and handed it to the young man. Returning home he read: "Stand in the sunlight and cast a shadow, and let a tired workman eat his dinner in it." In short, Mr. Brooks desired to impress the great duty: Make your life a Parthenon, not a pyramid. Do something useful to others, be it never so small.

I apply the same law of service to the universe as a whole. Astronomy has amazed us by its revelations of the vastness of the physical creation, and we agree with the Psalmist in saying, "The heavens declare the glory of God, the firmament showeth his handiwork." But that is not all. The universe is not a pyramid, but a Parthenon. It is not an end, but a means. There is some great use, some wondrous shining goal ahead, which God is going to achieve through this vast and ponderous frame. As there is "one God, one law, one element," so there is "one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves."

III. Consider next the cost of service. Christ "gave His life" a ransom for many. All the best things are produced at great cost. No science has calculated fully the heat and pressure required in nature to produce diamonds. Human genius has not yet cast up the cost in sunlight and moisture and electricity and carbon and vital force to produce the lowliest plant.

If we could trace the processes of nature we would find that "dying to live" is the greatest underlying principle. A natural force or energy passes out of one form, dies to its old self, in order to rise to a new form of existence. The electric light that blazes above you on the street at night is the transformed energy of the coal which heated the furnace of the dynamo. The coal surrendered itself to the flame and rose on stepping-stones of its dead self to higher things. The

fern plants, or other vegetable life of a past age gave up its being to become the coal beds of nature. They, too, died "that they might live." The ferns and vegetation drew their energy from the heat and power of the sunlight of the primitive age which nourished them. The sunlight thus died that it might live again in the ferns. Thus we pass from electric light through coal beds and vegetable life to primitive sunlight. We might apply with some variation of language the very words of the apostle in Philippians in reference to Christ, to the primitive sunshine: "Being in the form of sunshine, it counted it not a thing to be grasped to be on an equality with the sun, but emptied itself, and took the form of the fern plants and coal beds and lay buried for ages in the heart of the earth; wherefore man hath highly exalted it and given it a name above the other forces of nature in causing it to illumine his darkness and dispel his shadows."

This means that the world is built on the principle of the cross, that real service costs life. If we could begin with the tiniest plant or flower and unlock the secret door and enter the secret path leading back to the secret of its being and the real forces which make it, I think we would find it leading us upward and shining with increasing brightness until at last we would stand before the eternal God and we would discover that the ultimate secret of life, that baffling mystery of science, is God, giving Himself. Back of the sunbeams and raindrops and atmosphere is God, not doling out material little by little to build the flower, not building by proxy, but by personal self-giving.

We would thus see that all the universe is a place where God is doing what Jesus did in the upper

chamber when He bathed the dusty feet of the disciples. The sunlight is His towel and the clouds His basin which He carries about to minister to the needs of every living thing.

All real service costs. Christ seemed to serve without cost of energy or effort. His touch healed the leper. His command sent the demons into the swine. Unconscious power passed out of Him to heal the sick and infirm woman. It all seemed spontaneous. It looks like magic. There is no suggestion of cost, or effort, or struggle.

There was a twofold reason for this. The first was that the whole bent and direction of His life was to serve man and thus God's power reinforced His. He moved on and with the tide of the divine love and desire to heal. The other reason was that the struggle, the agonizing of His life was in the secret place of prayer. The place of agony in His life was not the market place or the public street where He did His great deeds, but in the closet, or on the mountain-top where He replenished His supply of divine strength and climbed up the long ascent of prayer to the fountains of eternal refreshment. Let us not forget this and imagine that there was no struggle in Christ's career. He was tempted as we are tempted but without sin. He overcame circumstances by strenuous endeavour. He breasted the storm by the invincible energy of prayer and holy endeavour. But all His higher moral conquests He won that He might bring the wealth and power of His glorious life to the task of serving men and thus glorifying God the Father whose love He came to reveal and express.

V

NO MAN LIVETH UNTO HIMSELF

Romans 14:7–8—*"For none of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."*

VERY remarkable is the movement of the thought of the apostle Paul. His mind swings back and forth between two great groups of ideas like the swing of a pendulum. He mounts up on steady wing and gives us some glorious vision of the divine, and at once he turns about and asks what it signifies on the human side. Or he is dealing with some very practical daily duty, and he suddenly bethinks himself, how is this duty to be performed by the weak and faltering hands of man, and this leads him back to the divine side of truth again. Thus his mind swings back and forth between the mystical and the practical, the divine and the human; thus he binds up religion and morality, faith and conduct, in a bundle of life together. He always feels that conduct breaks down without the religious faith behind it; and that religious faith is an empty thing without the corresponding practice.

Take one or two examples. In Romans 5:1–2 he says: "Being therefore justified by faith, we have

peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand; and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Thus he takes us by the hand and leads us through the door of faith up into the very presence of God so that Heaven becomes so vivid and real to us that we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. But the light shines back upon this life, and he adds: "And not only so, but we also rejoice in our tribulations; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, approvedness; and approvedness, hope; and hope putteth not to shame; because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given us."

Or take another passage, as in Colossians 3: 1–4, "If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth. For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory."

Here again he leads us out into the golden light of the risen glory, and lures our imagination away from the earthly up into the heavenly, and yet instantly his practical mind returns, and he begins: "Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry; for which things' sake cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience."

In the text his mind swings from the opposite direc-

tion. He is telling the Roman Christians to be considerate of one another. He is dealing with a very practical matter. Some could eat meat offered to idols and others could not. He exhorts the stronger Christians to be considerate of the weak, and urges the weaker Christians not to judge those who are stronger and eat without defilement to conscience. Then he feels the need of a strong religious reinforcement of the teaching and utters the words of the text: "None of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."

Let us study this teaching a few moments. The unity of our individual life with other lives, and the unity of all our lives with Jesus Christ the Lord.

We note first the law which binds us together in a common life. We are bound together by a physical unity. We live on the same planet. This physical unity underlies all kinds of unities, commercial, social, political. Somebody was careless in the powder mill recently, and a whole village was wrecked. It is said yellow fever entered the South in the last New Orleans epidemic through the carelessness of a United States quarantine officer and all the nation suffered. A Mohammedan devotee goes to Mecca and drinks from the sacred but very filthy pool and is taken ill on his return home and as a consequence Asiatic cholera begins to stalk across Europe, and all the machinery of many governments begins to move to stamp it out. How dependent we all are upon one another! Many a night on a sleeper, travelling thirty or forty miles an hour, have I thought of the engineer away forward, and I have been thankful that he was sober and cool

and conscientious, and have felt like going forward at the end of the journey to thank him. I note that beautiful marvel of mechanical construction, the automobile, as it speeds past me, and I reflect upon its many parts, and their nice adjustments, and the many workmen who combined in its production, and the results if a single part were to give way, and I am amazed at the inter-dependence of the parts of the machine and of buyers and riders on the one side, and workmen on the other. Now the Kingdom of God is to be a perfect moral and spiritual mechanism, when it is completed, and we are the workmen who are fitting the parts together.

The law which binds us together is in part our common humanity. We have a common hunger and thirst, and common longing for friendship, and sympathy and love. We are subject to the same perils and limitations, and all alike destined to a brief earthly life and then departure into the world which lies beyond our human ken.

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power
And all that rank or wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour
The path of glory leads but to the grave."

Again, we are bound together by the fact that we have a common likeness, the image of God. All members of the human race then are morally and spiritually the closest of kin, because they bear the stamp of the divine image. The Old Testament is a wonderful book in many ways, but in none more wonderful than its reverence for humanity. No people of antiquity save the Jews, and no literature of antiquity

save the Old Testament, valued man for this great reason that man is made in God's image. The death penalty was enjoined in the case of murder because the murdered man bore God's image. "For in the image of God, created he him." Commanders and Kings of ancient times used men as tools merely to build pyramids, or win battles and extend dominion! They were worth their rations as soldiers or bricklayers if they could be used, and they were as worthless as Australian rabbits or the Gypsy moth of New England, only to be exterminated, if they were in the way. But this was not true in the Old Testament view. Isaiah comforts the forlorn exiles in Babylon who thought God had forgotten them, by pointing to the skies at midnight and saying, "He that made the stars and sustains them; He that leads them out and calls them by name as a shepherd his sheep, is not faint or weary, nor has He forgotten you, O weary captives and fainting believers. . . . He knows your names and holds your individual destinies in the hollow of His hand." Thus the Hebrew prophet would make them value one another because of God's valuation of each of them.

It is this image and likeness of God in us which unites us in the higher ranges of our being. From it comes our common heart hunger for God, our sense of the insufficiency of the present life and its satisfactions.

In Jesus especially we observe this recognition of the moral unity of the race. Every day of His life, and practically every act was an illustration of the truth, "No man liveth to himself." He saw, as no one had ever seen, the divine image in man. One day He held a Roman coin in His hand and asked,

"Whose image and superscription is this?" and added, "render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." But every day He held human souls in His hands and asked, "Whose image and superscription is this?" and the answer was, "God's," and He was ever saying, "render to God the things that are God's."

Now Jesus' whole aim was to create a new moral kingdom. The physical unity which binds men together in the same planet, and the social unity which binds them together in the same social order, and the commercial unity which brings all the parts of the world together, and the unity of our common humanity, are all conditions for the realization of that higher unity based on our likeness to God, and capacity for God. Slowly He would cement human ties and adjust human relations until earthly society shall reproduce the harmony and rhythm and glory and beauty of the stars in their courses. This is what He means by the prayer, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

But the supreme unifying agency in Paul's mind is the cross of Jesus Christ. He has in all the preceding chapters given his glorious exposition of the cross, and now he is outlining the practical meaning of the cross. Up to chapter 12 is the argument, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." That is his first point. The second is, "being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ, whom God set forth to be a propitiation for our sins, through faith in His blood." His third point is, "Being therefore justified by faith, let us have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." And his fourth point is our spiritual freedom. "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law

of sin and death." And finally he rounds out the thought with his triumphant burst of faith and hope, "Whom he foreknew he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his son. And whom he foreordained, them he also called, and whom he called he also justified, and whom he justified he also glorified." Having finished his great argument he begins chapter twelve with this thrilling "Therefore." "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Eleven chapters of argument and five chapters of therefores. The therefore of Christianity is the practical side, and all five of these chapters are made up of therefores. In fact, all five of these chapters just give us in one form or another the great truth, "No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself."

Paul is here sitting as a weaver at a loom, weaving human lives together with a new principle, the principle of the cross, the principle of love.

It is impossible for us in our Christian civilization to transport ourselves, even in imagination, back into the old world of selfishness and hate and isolation where Greek hated Roman, and Roman hated Greek; where Jew hated Gentile, and Gentile Jew; where barbarian and bondman, and soldier and civilian, and ignorant and learned, and poor and rich were so many names for hostile classes. It is impossible, I say, for us to realize conditions there, and what Paul's words meant when he urged upon Christians that they remember each other, and adopt as the law of their lives that "No man liveth unto himself."

I said Paul was a weaver, weaving human lives

together. The Roman government said he was an anarchist, or in modern phrase a dynamiter, seeking to overthrow the Roman government. Strangely enough Paul names his Gospel by the very word which moderns have selected for one of the most powerful explosives, dynamite. He calls it the dynamite of God, and really when we think of the iron band of unity which clamped that old Roman world together, and the iron rod of authority which compelled men, and the hate and racial antagonisms which made fierce animals of men, Paul does seem to be a dynamiter.

Look for a moment at some of the dynamite Paul is putting under that old Roman empire. Here is one piece of it: "For even as we have many members in one body, so we who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members of one another." Oh, yes, Paul, you are a dangerous man to that old Roman government!

Here is another charge of dynamite sent right into the Roman capitol: "Bless them that persecute you, bless and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice and weep with them that weep." Be careful, Paul, the Roman power will resent your words. You are a dangerous man.

Then think of the awful heresy of this: "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Avenge not yourselves, beloved; for it is written, 'Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord.'" Paul, this is anarchy and sedition. Your head is in danger. The Roman Emperor and the Roman army will hound you to death for this. What will the soldiers say who love to pillage towns and villages?

But there is more of this dynamite. Listen to this

slogan of the revolutionist: "Owe no man anything save to love one another; for he that loveth his neighbour hath fulfilled the law." Be careful, Paul, Rome has a great army and a great navy and they are made to kill. You are a dynamiter of the worst kind, for your words will destroy armies and navies if carried out.

Not only is Paul giving such revolutionary ideas to his Roman readers, but actually these principles are beginning to work. Men are beginning to live for one another and recognize Paul's teachings. Even the Greek city of Corinth has in it a group who are interested in the strangers yonder at Rome. Read the last chapter, the sixteenth, a chapter rarely read and still more rarely preached from! Yet one of the most remarkable chapters ever written, considering the time, place and circumstances. The literature of the period has nothing to compare with it. It is mainly a list of salutations and personal greetings. Tertius is Paul's amanuensis, and before closing everybody wanted to send greetings to everybody else. Paul sends a long list of personal greetings, and then numerous others ask to be remembered. "Timothy my fellow-worker saluteth you; also Lucius and Jason and Sosipater my kinsman." Tertius, the amanuensis, does not want to be left out, so he adds: "I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord." Then comes Gaius, Paul's host, and asks to be remembered, and Erastus, the treasurer of the city, and finally a modest man comes up and whispers to Tertius, who calls himself simply Quartus, the brother, and says, "Send my love too."

Now is not that beautiful? I have sometimes wondered who Quartus was, who comes last in the list

and simply calls himself brother. He might have been the mayor, or the town clerk, or the chief of police, or the recorder of deeds, or the sexton of the church, or the valet of some wealthy Greek, but whatever else he was he was "the brother." That was the wonder-working word after all, a word capable of putting out all the Roman campfires and overthrowing all the tyrannies of the world. Quartus the brother in sending his little message of greeting and love was thus sending a little thread of fine gold, spun in heaven, across from Corinth to Rome to aid in sewing together the gaping wound of racial hate and antiquity.

Now, in conclusion, I wish to draw two or three brief lessons.

(1) First a lesson of gratitude, second a lesson of hope, and third a lesson of responsibility.

A lesson of gratitude to those of the past who adopted Paul's principles in their lives and from whose lives we have reaped. "No one liveth to himself." I think of the influence that made me, of the father and mother who cared for me, who taught me to pray, who encouraged me to do right, who yearned over me when I went astray, and who left me the heritage of a good name and clean blood, and faith in God. I think of the friends who have inspired me to the highest things; the teachers who have lifted the veil and showed me the vision of life; of the pastors who have stood before me and pointed my life and speech to the gates of the eternal city. I think of Christian civilization and all it has meant to be born here rather than beneath some other sky. I think of the thousands of blessed influences, I say, which have meant to me all that is truest and deepest in life, influences proceeding from lives which were lived on Paul's

principles; "No man liveth unto himself and none dieth to himself; For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's," and my heart is stirred within me to the deepest gratitude to God for those who grasped Paul's ideal and caught the vision.

(2) And the second lesson I get is a lesson of responsibility. No man can live in the modern world without feeling keenly the pressure and urgency of this principle in our lives. We have seen how it is in the very constitution of society. We cannot escape its action if we would. A man may try to be a cosmopolitan in his business enterprise and a Robinson Crusoe in his sympathies. But it is impossible to do so without paying a heavy penalty. A man might as well vote that he would henceforth refuse to submit to the law of gravitation and walk off into space from the roof of a tall building in the hope of escaping the consequences of his folly, as to attempt to wall himself in from his fellows in his sympathies and his outlook upon life. There is a law of moral gravitation which clutches us tenaciously and subjects us to itself, and it says: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," and "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also unto them."

(3) I learn also a lesson of hope. The moral law to which I have just referred may all be summed up in one word. It is the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, which is coming, surely coming over the earth. Men are slowly learning Christ's valuation of humanity and the law of interdependence. Humanity, made in the image of God, is sacred in all its manifestation. The servants in our homes bear the stamp of the divine image

and we are learning to treat them with consideration and kindness. The negro who was once our slave, we are slowly learning, though far too slowly learning, to regard as Quartus, the brother, hence the schools and plans for their education. We are learning too slowly, indeed, but learning that we have no right to exploit our fellowmen for mere gain, and that we must recognize in each and all the image of God, and in our legislation provide for the protection of eyesight and health. A deep and widespread feeling of indignation that disease has so long ravaged mankind prevails. Hence, organizations to stamp out tuberculosis, and institutes to discover remedies for diseases of children, a foregleam of the state of things "when there shall be no more pain." Christian people of every name think of the heathen nations, "the low-born, sullen peoples, half demon and half child," as also bearing the stamp of the divine image, and calling out for help; hence the missionary enterprise. Thus if we gaze upward we may faintly, very faintly discern, far, far away, the outlines of the city of God, which is coming down from heaven to earth with gates of pearl and streets of gold. If we would hasten its coming we need only make vital and effective in our lives Paul's words:

"For none of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord, or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."

VI

AN ANCIENT RECIPE FOR A HAPPY LIFE

I Peter 3: 10–12—*"For he that would love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that he speak no guile: And let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace, and pursue it, for the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears unto their supplication: but the face of the Lord is upon them that do evil."*

I HAVE called this an ancient recipe for a happy life. It is an Old Testament teaching reproduced in a New Testament setting. Its meaning is greatly enlarged and enhanced by the light shed upon it through the revelation in Jesus Christ. The Old Testament in all its parts is best understood through the teachings of the New. It has been said that the teachings in the Old Testament are like writing in invisible ink. The teachings of the New may be compared to the acid which is put upon the ink to bring the writing into clearness. Perhaps an even better illustration is that the Old Testament teaching is like the trickling stream of water flowing at the bottom of the deep banks of a tidal river. The river flows down to the sea. Ordinarily, its channel is but partially filled with water, but when the tide rolls in from the sea the channel is filled and the river overflows its banks. The gospel as revealed to us in Jesus Christ is the great tide of divine truth flowing back

into the channels of Old Testament teaching and filling them to the brim with meaning and power.

The text which I have read contains the elements of a happy life. It might be called, indeed, the alphabet of the Christian life, but its truths are stated so simply and so clearly that we may properly call it an ancient recipe for a happy life.

Let us note now some of the elements that enter into this happy life. Observe first the form of statement, "he that would love life." Mark you, it does not say "he that seeks prosperity, or he that would avoid adversity." The text does not mean bright days or dark days, sunshine or shadow. The text does not mean mere existence. It does not mean poverty or wealth, sickness or health. It means something deeper, richer, and fuller—life itself. "He that would love life," that rich, full, divine thing which comes out of God Himself, may find it if he will.

Observe again the next clause in the description, he that would see "good days." We are all familiar with good days and bad days in the ordinary sense of the word. The business man returns home at night and says, "This has been a good day. Business was brisk. Many new orders were received; some old bills were paid; everything went right." At another time he says, "This has been a bad day; things went all wrong." So also the housekeeper has her good days and her bad days. Days are like oranges. We say of a good orange that it is large and that it is juicy, and that it is sweet and that it is tender. The orange with these qualities has all the good points of an orange. If an orange is little and sour and dry and tough, it possesses none of the qualities of a good orange.

Now the text says that our days may be like the good orange, that all our days may have the good points. If we have the Christian aim and the Christian spirit and the Christian faith and the Christian obedience, our days will all of them be good days.

Now, mark you that good days are not to be measured by their outward appearance. Riches do not necessarily make good days, neither does position or power. It is related that at one time the Czar of Russia was afraid for his life and had reduced his diet to the one item of eggs, and these were served in the shell in order to prevent poison. Bye and bye, he discovered that poison could be injected through the shell, and then his happiness faded away. Death lurked even on the dinner plate. Position and power may be coupled with a heavy heart. As the poet has said:

> "'Tis better to be lowly born,
> And dwell with humble livers in content,
> Than to be perched upon a glistening grief
> And wear a golden sorrow."

Indeed, it is true that many a throne is a glistening grief and many a crown is a golden sorrow, and Robert Burns was correct in the lines which he has left:

> "'Tis no in titles nor in rank;
> 'Tis no in wealth like London bank,
> To purchase peace and rest,
> If happiness hae not her seat and centre in the breast.
> We may be rich, or wise, or great,
> But never can be blest."

Now let us take up in detail the list of requirements for a happy life. The first is expressed in the clause, "let him refrain his tongue from evil." Literally, we may say, "let him break back his tongue from evil; let him deal vigorously with his tongue." The tongue, though a little member, boasteth great things. A man who can control his tongue is a man of power. The tongue is mighty for good or ill. It is related that a certain Greek philosopher who expected a guest for dinner told his servant to provide a single dish for the meal, but it was to be the best dish the servant could prepare. When the philosopher and his visitor sat down to the table, there was one item in the menu, namely, a dish of tongue. The servant explained that tongue is the best of all dishes because with it we may bless; with it we may communicate happiness. With the tongue we may dispel the clouds of sorrow, remove despair, cheer the faint-hearted, inspire the discouraged, and do a hundred other things uplifting to men and women. The philosopher was pleased and told the servant that the next day he should serve a single dish which must be the worst dish he could provide. Again a dish of tongue appeared on the table. The servant explained that tongue was the worst thing in the world because with it we may curse and break human hearts; we may destroy reputations, promote discord and strife, set families, communities, and nations at war with each other. And again the philosopher commended his servant for wisdom.

Another injunction in the text, closely akin to that regarding the tongue, is found in the words "and his lips from speaking guile." Guile means deception. The figure is that of a baited hook to catch the unwary and we are urged to turn from deceptive speech. And

this is one ingredient in the happy life, the tongue which we hold in subjection. Our words, so long as we keep them in our own possession, are weapons with which we may win victories, but idle words and harmful words which we wantonly let fly from our lips may become swords in the hands of our enemy with which he may fight us.

Observe that the next ingredient in the happy life is the avoidance of evil. In verse eleven we read, "let him turn away from evil." Let him swerve around the evil thing. We have noticed boys in skating. The prudent boy swerves around the thin place in the ice. The reckless boy attempts to skate over it and it is the reckless boy who comes to grief. Happy is the young person or the older person who has formed the habit of swerving around evil. The forms of evil in our modern cities are so many that it is difficult for the young, unless they are on their guard constantly, to escape. I once saw a picture which represented a bird hovering in the air and beating its wings as if in a frantic effort to escape from some great danger. As I looked I saw at first nothing to hinder the escape of the bird, but presently I noticed that a snake lying coiled on the top of a stone fence had fixed its deadly gaze upon the bird and held it under its fascinating glance. Underneath the picture were the words, "The Sociable Snake." The picture is a parable. There are many places in our modern cities full of evil and with power for evil over those who frequent them. They may be described as sociable snakes, which charm them, fascinate them, grip them in a deadly clutch and lure to destruction. This is a vital element in the happy life, to turn around, to swerve away from evil.

But, indeed, the avoidance of evil is the negative side of a happy life. The text then adds "and do good." This is the positive side. Negative goodness is real goodness, but it is not the highest kind of goodness. It is only when our goodness becomes positive and active that it possesses the highest qualities. There are three kinds of trees, the thorn tree, the fruit-bearing tree, and the tree that has neither thorns nor fruit. The bad man is like the thorn tree and the good man in the sense of text is the fruit tree. The man who stands between the two has neither thorns nor fruit, but will soon begin to bear thorns. Every Christian needs a task. He needs some positive undertaking to hold him to his highest and best. Jesus said, "We must work the works of him that sent me." May it be our motto that we will be workers in the kingdom of God? Let us catch the spirit of the little poem:

"Time worketh; let me work too.
Time undoeth; oh, let me do.
As busy as time, my task I ply
Till I rest the rest of eternity.

"Sin worketh; let me work too.
Sin undoeth; oh, let me do.
As busy as sin, my task I ply
Till I rest the rest of eternity.

"Death worketh; let me work too.
Death undoeth; oh, let me do.
As busy as death, my task I ply
Till I rest the rest of eternity."

Note again that as an ingredient in the happy life we must "seek peace and pursue it." Here the word

peace is no doubt a comprehensive word. It means peace with God and peace with men. Jesus Christ, who died for our sins, is our peace with God. It is He through whom we come to God. We trust Him and God accepts us; "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." This is really the corner-stone of the happy life. No life can be fruitful in doing good; no life can avoid evil; no life can control the tongue; no life can see good days and truly love life unless it is a life at peace with God. If we have peace with God, we will cultivate peace with our fellow-man. The world gives back the image we present to it. The peaceful man will find peaceful neighbours. The contentious man will find contentious people around him. An immigrant woman in a Western town who stopped a few hours in camp enquired of another woman who lived in the town what kind of people lived in the next town whither she was bound, whether they were good people, neighbourly people, or cold, distant, and selfish people. In reply, the lady to whom the question was addressed said, "First I will ask you a question. What kind of people did you leave where you came from? Were they good, kind, neighbourly folks, or were they cold, distant, selfish people? You will find the same sort of people where you go that you left behind you." In a real sense, we carry our world within us. We make our environment. Strangers sometimes complain that churches are unresponsive and unsocial to visitors. This may be true of some churches, but it is often true that the visitor is looking for slights and for coldness. Let him bring a warm heart and he will be likely to find a warm heart.

The closing part of my text assigns the reason

why these ingredients make a happy life. These are the words, "because the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are open to their supplication." This means that God hears our prayers. It means that He has interest in our affairs. It means that in all our undertakings we may invoke His blessings and count upon His favour. We shall fail in our realization of the conditions of a happy life unless we keep close contact with God through prayer. Many are discouraged in prayer because God sometimes seems not to hear. There is but one thing to do when we seek God's blessing upon our undertakings and that is to continue our prayers until an answer comes. He will either give us what we ask or something better. Perseverance in prayer will save us from the sense of defeat and give us a sense of victory.

Sometimes in their early stages our prayers labour and seem to be in vain. If we persevere, we win the victory. I learned a lesson once from a bird which battled with the storm. It was high in the air. A heavy gale was blowing. The bird spread its wings and launched its flight directly in the teeth of the wind. It was blown backward and downward, but, undiscouraged, it gathered itself together and hurled its little body against the gale only to be beaten down again and again. I said as I gazed, "Little bird, you are too frail for the storm. You will have to fly in the other direction." I was mistaken; presently the bird taught me a lesson. Instead of flying against the wind, it turned its gaze and flight upward at an angle. It proceeded up and up until it was nearly beyond my sight, and presently it faced in the direction it had been trying to fly and sped forward swift as an arrow, without encountering resistance of any kind.

The bird had simply risen above the storm. It had fought its way through the opposing gale. It had found in an upper stratum of air a place of calm and it sped forward on unhindered wings. Even so the child of God may rise to blessed heights of fellowship and communion through prayer, battling his way through many a storm, temptation, and trial, but at length triumphing over all opposition.

Let us adopt for our own this ancient recipe for a happy life and let us make it effective by our constant prayers to the God of love, who never takes His eye from His children.

VII

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD

Matthew 6:9—*"Our Father."* John 14:9—*"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."*

SOME one has remarked that there are three stages in the growth of a human soul. The first when it becomes conscious of the world about it. The infant sees this world as a "great buzzing, blooming confusion," and understands nothing of it. The next stage is when the soul becomes conscious of itself as a distinct person and individual separate from others and responsible. The third stage is when it becomes conscious of God. I would add a fourth stage and that is when the soul passes from the idea of God as King and ruler up to the idea of God as Father. This is the supreme moment in the history of any soul. Let us meditate for a time upon this great thought—The Fatherhood of God. We observe:

(1) The Fatherhood of God is the supreme note in the Revelation which Christ brought to the world. What a radiant and wonderful picture of God's Fatherhood it is that Jesus discloses. God the Father cares for every created thing. He clothes the grass and robes the lily of the field in its beautiful garments. He scatters crumbs to the ravens and stretches out a tender hand when the sparrow falls. He sends the rain on the evil and the just. He forgives us and

stands with open arms to welcome the returning prodigal. He whispers His secrets to the docile, childlike mind and sends the self-sufficient and worldly-wise empty away. He hears our prayers and gives us the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Christ was the Revealer of the Father to mankind. As the lines in the solar spectrum tell us the substances which are in the sun nearly a hundred million miles away, so Jesus Christ reveals what is in the invisible God. One great truth which stands out in that revelation is that there is something human in God, for Jesus became man. The incarnation proclaims the kinship of God and man.

We as His children reproduce His likeness and men are thus led to glorify Him. When we forgive our enemies we are simply reflecting the beauty of His forgiving love. When we are generous in our gifts to His cause we simply proclaim that our Father has a nature which loves to bestow blessings, which eternally imparts. Our good works are the reflection in us of His holy energy. Our lives are looms in which we weave holy character. God our Father supplies the threads of gold from His own divine nature. If we could but see them, they are coming down steadily, those threads which we weave into the fabric of our lives. The golden thread of patience, the golden thread of gentleness, the golden thread of moral courage and of love, coming to us through His fingers and reproducing in us His likeness. As the sunlight is invisible until it has a surface to reflect it, or an object of some kind to concentrate it, so God's Fatherhood requires an object, His own children. As the meadow reflects the sunshine, so does His Fatherhood shine back from us. We reveal God's traits and He illu-

mines and glorifies our lives. As the sunlight falling on Niagara Falls reveals the water, and as the gleaming, leaping, and iridescent waters reveal the sunshine, so God's Fatherhood reveals what we are and our sonship reveals what God is. All our own higher traits, then, tell of God. We know that He loves the beautiful because we love it so. Who can gaze upon orchids and roses, or pearls and rubies, or evening clouds and midnight skies, and doubt that He loves the beautiful? God the Father, contrary to the view of many, must have a sense of humour. Who can look at the antics of monkeys or the pranks and original ways of children and doubt it? He must often smile when His earthly children under some little flea-bite of loss or pain, sit down in a corner with lugubrious countenance and act as if God the Father were dead. And I think He must often chuckle to Himself with delight as He plans some great and wondrous gift for His loving child, by stealing into the life, and, like the great Santa Claus that He is, hiding it where you will find it and then slipping out again. Of course He loves with an everlasting love. Christ's whole career, His words and works, His atonement, His resurrection and gift of the Spirit, these are the blazing glory of His love and grace.

(2) The Fatherhood of God is the Master key to the problems of human existence. The most convincing proof that any great truth is really true lies in this, that it includes in itself many other truths, that you can fit together in a harmonious whole all the other truths under the larger truth. The majestic and brilliant imagery and movement in Homer's Iliad seem confusing and misleading until the key is found in the effort of the Greeks to recapture Helen from the

Trojans. The movements of the parts of a great army seem meaningless until the plan of the general becomes clear. So the world is full of confusion and contradiction until the key to its mysteries is found. Even to-day there are many jangling voices among scientists and philosophers as to the meaning of the world. One speaks of a great first cause and stops there. Another asserts that matter and force are the final facts of the universe. Matthew Arnold would only dare to assert that it is a "power not ourselves that makes for righteousness." None of these things kindle our enthusiasm when viewed alone. It is only as they approximate the idea of Fatherhood that they have power. The idea of a first great cause leaves you cold. The idea of an intelligent first cause kindles a little blaze and attracts your attention. When this cause is represented as having a purpose which runs through all history, then it leaps into a little flame at which you warm your hands. When it is asserted that this cause with a purpose running through history takes account of individuals, counts and names the stars in the sky, and counts and names the hairs of our heads, then it becomes an intense blaze of heat and power. When finally this great purposeful individualizing cause is described as Father, then it sets all the joybells of the heart to ringing and becomes a sun to illuminate and warm and irradiate all of life.

Now the great thing Jesus did was to make the idea of God the Father real. As a bird cannot fly in a vacuum, so the soul cannot subsist on an abstract conception of God. Jesus took the idea of causation and of intelligence and of force and the other fragments which men had found and mixed them as a painter mixes colours and added His own radiant and gracious

doctrine of Fatherhood like a colour snatched from the milky way. With these colours He portrayed a new likeness of God instead of the old dim representation. He put warmth into the face, and love into the eyes. He made the face radiant with Fatherhood.

Now when this view of the divine Being was made current in men's thoughts, they ceased to speculate and went to work. They ceased to ask whence come we and whither go we? Is man immortal, or does he perish like the beasts of the field? They knew that God's child cannot perish because God cannot perish. The mystery of the first cause and the final cause was solved. Christ took the half truths and the false views of men and put them together in one harmonious whole. These were like the parts of some great power plant, some mighty engine, which had been shipped in separate pieces and were lying there waiting for the Master Machinist to put them together. Jesus was that Master, and Fatherhood was the one great comprehensive idea which included all the parts. With it He set in motion the moral machinery of the world. This leads to my next point.

(3) I remark next that Christ's teaching of Fatherhood is the Master key not only to man's intellectual but to his moral difficulties. How to become good one's self, how to make men good, that has always been the supreme task. Various ways have been suggested. One says make men good by making them comfortable. Give them good food and clothing and good houses. Save them by mutton chops and Brussels carpets. We know this alone fails. Another says make men good by legislation. But legislation never made anybody good. It only restrains evil. It limits vice and sin, but does not transform the vicious or

regenerate the sinner. Legislation can put the cobra in a cage of glass, but it cannot extract its poison, and it will still strike at you behind the glass. Drawing the tiger's teeth does not take away its thirst for blood.

There is but one way to become good or to make others good and that is to give them a sense of God's Fatherhood through faith in Christ. Human nature requires the highest incentives because it is so high in capabilities. Eternal forces must play on man to make him good. To a man like Haeckel, human nature is a poor, mean thing, but not to those who understand it and the forces which make it. Human experience has taught us that nothing less than the imperial and matchless conception of God's Fatherhood avails to lift man to the highest moral heights.

See what it does for man. It cures him of care. "In nothing be anxious, but in everything by prayer and supplication make known your requests unto God," is the recipe for care based on Fatherhood. One has analyzed it thus: (1) The bane of life is care, "In nothing be anxious." (2) The cure of care is prayer, "But in everything by prayer and supplication make your requests known." (3) The crown of prayer is peace, "And the peace of God that passeth all understanding shall sentinel your minds and hearts in Christ Jesus."

God's Fatherhood illuminates suffering. Who has not been baffled by the mystery of suffering and longed to relieve it? What is the meaning of the age-long agony of the saints? Fatherhood gives the only answer, "For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to usward. For the earnest

expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God . . . in hope that the creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the children of God."—Rom. 8: 18.

God perfects His children through suffering. They are as

> "Iron dug from central gloom
> And heated hot with burning fears
> And dipped in baths of hissing tears
> And battered with the shocks of doom
> To shape and use."

God loves us too much to be content with anything but our best moral and spiritual development. Suffering is His method of bringing out the hidden beauties of our souls.

Fatherhood enlarges desire and expands the spirit of man. It puts wings on the spirit and enables it to soar. Listen to the prayer which God's Fatherhood kindled in the soul of the great Apostle to the Gentiles in Ephesians, Chapter three, beginning at verse 14, and you are impressed with the expansiveness of soul which the sense of God's Fatherhood produces.

God's Fatherhood glorifies work. Work has been regarded as a curse. Men connect it with the first sin and the expulsion from Eden. Jesus took away the stigma from work by showing that work is just the imitation of God. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," said Jesus. Work is the law of the child's existence because it is the law of the Father's existence. All nature manifests that energy of God. The restless tides of the sea, the ceaseless movements

of the atmosphere, the mighty swing of the planets, the wheeling stars and suns. All these are parts of His workshop where in tireless and sleepless energy He plans and labours for His creatures. In human history He works, enabling His children to achieve moral progress. Each generation takes up the task where its predecessor left it off, and carries it a step nearer towards the one far off divine event to which the whole creation moves. Work, then, is the free and glad imitation of God our Father.

The Fatherhood of God is, of course, the key to prayer and makes clear its possibility. Men talk of the mechanism of nature as excluding the idea of prayer. But men forget that there is a higher as well as a lower mechanism. One is the mechanism of the machine, the other that of the family. Any beautiful result comes if the adjustments of the forces of nature are properly made. The adjustment of the sun to one kind of seed gives me the climbing vine and beautiful pink blossom I see through my window. In like manner the proper adjustment of man, the child, to God, the Father, gives all the lovely effects, among them prayer, which arches the horizon of man like a rainbow of eternal hope.

Thus God's Fatherhood is the Master key to life's problems and progress. It includes all the other truths in itself. A recent writer says the piano is the king among musical instruments, because with it you can produce all musical effects. On the piano the skilled player can render anything in music. He can reproduce the human voice, or the sounds of the orchestra, the shrill notes of the piccolo, the sustained notes of the horns, the majestic accents of the trombones and the low growls of the bass instruments, any sound from

the gentlest *pianissimo* to the most beautiful *forte,* and any emotion from the deepest melancholy to the highest notes of triumph. "He who commends the row of white and black keys is ruler of the spirits of music. He has all that music can give within the grasp of his two hands, under his ten fingers."

Now that is a parable. Among revealed truths God's Fatherhood is the King truth, and he who has learned its full meaning has at his command all moral harmony, all spiritual music. Under its action he unfolds into all moral and spiritual beauty, he reproduces God's image in a human life.

Sidney Lanier has written a sonnet in German addressed to Frau Nannette Falck-Auerbach, the musician. As Nannette plays Beethoven's music on the piano the great composer's spirit is drawn from heaven by the wondrous power of the player and the poet sees Beethoven by her side and hears him saying, "Thou art my child. I had no child while on earth. Now God has given thee to me, thou, my child in music, my second life." Thus do we reproduce the works of our Father, thus does our Father come into our life. Thus do men see our good works and glorify Him.

We consider briefly now how we are to realize Fatherhood. The theory of Fatherhood is of no more value than any lower truth. "A gold piece is worth more than a brass piece, but an imitation gold piece is worth no more than an imitation brass piece." Handel's "Messiah" is more inspiring than a piece of rag-time music; but the mere notes of the one printed on a page has no more power than the other. "The sun is warmer than an ice-berg, but the picture of the

sun is no warmer than the picture of an ice-berg." So Dr. Parkhurst expresses it, and he is correct.

Above all things we need the note of reality in religion, and especially on the great subject of God's Fatherhood.

To realize the Fatherhood of God and make it practical, two or three things are necessary.

First, we accept God as Father through the Revelation of Him Christ gave: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," Christ declared. He is the effulgence of the Father's glory and the image of His substance.

Is God the Father of all men? In reply I would say that the Fatherhood and sonship of the New Testament express a high and spiritual relationship. God indeed is paternal in His yearning and love for all. He wishes that all men might yield obedience to Him. He created men in His own image. Men are constituted in their spirits for sonship. They have capacity for sonship. But it is a great error to efface the line of distinction between the natural and the spiritual here. First the natural, then the spiritual. God is not the spiritual Father of the pitiless murderer. God's fatherly desire towards all does not make the morally vicious His true children. Sonship is not to be confounded with mere potentiality or capacity for sonship. To those who received Christ, He gave the authority to become sons of God. Our free choice of Him is the most precious element in our sonship. We are all sons of God, as Paul says, by faith in Jesus Christ. Let us not confuse values. Let us keep the coin of the moral and spiritual realm free from alloy.

We can only gradually realize the full meaning of

God's Fatherhood. It is like our realization of human Motherhood. Our own mothers are at first no more than a little patch of colour, a soothing sound and a gentle touch to our infant eyes and ears. Then they become distinct persons who love us, as we see by slow degrees, and if we are loving and discerning and reflect upon it much and live a long time, perhaps before we die we get some faint conception of the wondrous abysmal love and transcendent glory of motherhood. Thus in a far higher sense do we come to know God's Fatherhood. It grows and expands and enlarges to our view as the manifold experiences of life teach us. Happy, thrice happy is he who takes God's Fatherhood as the working principal of his entire life and makes it real in conduct. Miserable, thrice miserable is he who casts away God's Fatherhood and his own privilege of sonship and who chooses in time and eternity to wander as a waif and an orphan through the mazes of sin and selfishness of life and destiny.

VIII

FREEDOM, TRUE AND FALSE

John 8:32 and 36—*"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." . . . "If the son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."*

WE say that Christ came to redeem men. He also came to redeem words. He put new meaning into old words. He evangelized them, so to speak. He called them to repentance. He gave them a new heart, regenerated them, justified and adopted them. One of the words which He dealt with thus was the word freedom, the Jew boasted of freedom because he was descended from Abraham. The Roman because of his citizenship. Ordinarily men define liberty as freedom to pursue one's object unmolested. Political liberty is the right to speak and vote and exercise the rights of the citizen. Intellectual liberty is freedom to think one's own thoughts and express one's own views. Industrial and commercial liberty is freedom of opportunity in business. Religious liberty is freedom to worship God according to the dictates of one's conscious, unhindered by civil or ecclesiastical authority of any kind.

Now Jesus here directs us to the root of all freedom, something deeper and richer than any of these that I have named. Freedom based on Truth and Freedom imparted through sonship, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

Truth means adjustment. Freedom through truth means freedom resulting from agreement between the constitution of our natures and the constitution of the universe. Imagine some very potent being holding in his hand a little lump of matter. He knows its nature through and through. He wants to relate it in a certain way to the atmosphere which he also knows through and through. We observe him carefully as he kneads and rolls and moulds and shapes the bit of matter and slowly it is transformed into a pair of wings which he attaches to a wingless creature, enabling it to fly. This would be true freedom, conformity of the wings to the air. This is a fancy picture, but it is what God does in constructing a bird's wing. Freedom through truth comes to us in the same way. Our souls are conformed to the universe of reality, and we who were spiritually without wings are enabled to fly.

Freedom through sonship is acceptance of a relation to God our Father. Behind the universe of truth is a Person. Not Abraham's descent, but royal descent from God makes us free.

Now, in order to understand this freedom which Christ gives through truth and by means of sonship, we shall look at certain aspects of the great idea of freedom and try to measure it and show how Christ gives ideal freedom.

(1) First, then, freedom is measured by the principle of control. We may conceive of three possible principles of human action and control. A man may be undetermined, determined by circumstances, or self-determined. Some seem to live an undetermined, capricious life without purpose or aim. Some are the sport of circumstances. They take the colour of their

surroundings. They are caught in the tides about them and carried whithersoever it goes. The whole issue lies here: Are you the potter and the world clay? Or is the world potter and you clay? The world always assumes that you are clay until you prove to it that you are potter. Now, to submit to the world in hopelessness and despair is slavery. To arise and assert yourself against it is rebellion, but not necessarily deliverance. To accept freedom through truth and sonship is to conquer the world. There is lodged in the soul a new energy to conquer sin, and grief, and loss, and pain, and hereditary bias, to conquer circumstances and to overcome the dead weight of this round planet. Some men are determined by circumstances. Others are self-determined. Christ gives self-determination. God matches manhood against matter, will against force. He launches human personality against earthquake and blizzards, famines and disease, and death and sin, against the whole weight and mass and power of the vast and towering threatening pitiless and grinding universe.

(2) Freedom is measured by the motive which directs. You can fix a man's place in the scale of being by the elevation or depression of his motive. Freedom is always born of a high motive. A man whose life is governed by a low motive, by resentment or revenge or avarice and greed, locks himself in a dungeon, and shuts out the universe of free and abounding life.

Now Christ gives freedom by elevating the motive. You may pursue the same object with a new motive and all the world is made anew for you. A friend of mine was telling me of a deer hunt he had recently had. I asked if he got any deer. "Yes," he replied,

"I got two. I will show them to you." He brought me a pencil sketch of two beautiful deer, saying, "Here they are." Then he told me how, rifle in hand, he came upon these beautiful creatures. He saw them through an opening in the underbrush, by a lakeside, and could not resist the impulse to lay down his gun and sketch them. He was an artist. The freedom of the huntsman gave place to the freedom of the artist. Freedom for him did not mean deer to shoot, but deer to look at, admire and sketch. He did not shoot the deer. The pictures satisfied him. Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war.

The love of occupation is inborn. This explains the destructive habits of the baby. Give him a pair of scissors, an ink bottle, and a hammer—and freedom, and it requires no gift of prophecy to enable you to foretell what the house will look like when he has rounded out his morning's labours. But take away the instruments of destruction and teach him rather the motive of construction, and you start him on a new career. He will paint pictures or build houses as readily as he will do other things. Now, human history for two thousand years has been Christ's effort to teach men the constructive motive and to put aside the destructive. He has been trying by spiritual influences to wrest from their hands the divisive scissors of national and racial exclusiveness and hate, and the ink bottle of greed and lust, and to take away from them the hammer of war and replace these by the implements of peace, the pen, the ploughshare, the pruning-knife, the painter's brush, the printing-press and the pulpit. Just in proportion as men have learned the lesson have they become free.

The instinct for conquest is one of the noblest we

have, if directed aright. There are two kinds of war. One is waged to gain territory by slaying men, the other to save human souls by slaying the spiritual foes of the race. One motive creates a Nero on the throne who pitilessly murders men by the thousand, and the other an apostle Paul in a dungeon under his throne who would give his life to redeem the lowliest of his fellowmen. One motive for war produces a Napoleon whose heart was stone, the other a John Knox, who in unselfish longing prayed to God, "Give me Scotland or I die." One war-impulse leads a man to follow the cannon, the drum and the battleship; the other to join the army of the Rider on the white horse in the book of Revelation, who goes forth with a single crown and returns as victor with all the crowns of earth upon his brow. Spiritual conquest gratifies man's inborn love of victory beyond all others.

Freedom really comes only when the spirit of man finds its true object and is impelled by the higher motive. One man seems to find his object when he sits astride a splendid thoroughbred horse; another when aboard a well-equipped yacht, sailing across the sea; another when in his greenhouse, surrounded by flowers. But none finds his soul's true object like the man who finds Christ. None have such spontaneity of action, such untrammelled energy and buoyancy as men who have acquired the freedom that Christ the Son gives. Look at Paul. He abounds in images which suggest spontaneity and exuberant joy. See him yonder, when like a mighty swimmer rising above the billows of adversity and difficulty he exclaims, "I can do all things through Christ." Hear him as he spreads the wings of devotion, and in

a splendid flight of mystic passion he shouts, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Observe him as he is caught in the mighty grip of moral enthusiasm and self-conquest, exulting in the joy of battle, "Thanks be to God, who always leads me in victory through Christ." See him again as he is impelled onward, the embodiment of flaming love and quenchless hope and deathless ambition, running the Christian race as one who treads on air and exclaiming, "Forgetting the things that are behind, I press towards the mark."

The moral career of Paul reminds one of the flight of some mighty eagle, long confined in a cage, and then released. As first he is uncertain of his new feeling of freedom, but at length becoming conscious of it, the heavy eyelids open, he looks about him, his drooping wings he gathers for flight, and then with a scream of joy, he soars away to the clouds. His eagle soul has found its object, God's free air. Jesus Christ is the atmosphere of the soul. In Him the soul finds its true object and freedom. Men become the slaves of Christ because He makes them autonomous, sets them free.

(3) Freedom is measured by the scale of development. A recent writer says we are all dwarfs because only a small portion of our brain area is developed. We might become tenfold greater and wiser if we could develop all our resources. It would seem absurd to speak of a jelly-fish flying through the air and discerning distant objects on the horizon. And yet the living cells in a jelly-fish are like the living cells of the eagle. The eagle, then, is just a highly developed jelly-fish. Men often remain jelly-fishes when they might become eagles of power.

We need all round development and not merely that everybody become a specialist. The expert or specialist is useful, but not the most useful member of society. It is true the mocking-bird is a specialist in nature, and so is the nightingale and the lark. But so also are the tiger and the hawk. The tiger doubtless is a connoisseur in detecting the delicate shades of flavour in the blood of his various victims. But he is a most inconvenient and unsocial member of society, especially when you meet him alone and he is hungry. Any good dog is a cultivated and accomplished gentleman in comparison with him, because he has moved in good society and has an all round development. What a charming companion a good dog is. He can talk and laugh and play with you as well as sorrow and suffer.

Now the human soul is endless in its capacity for growth and development. Niagara Falls is still going to waste, says the utilitarian money-maker, because a very small fraction of its power has been applied to machinery. Between us, I am glad of it, but it will serve as an illustration. Our natures are unused Niagaras of power in large part.

We should seek symmetry of development. Religion inspires and aids in this. Christ came to give freedom through abundant life. Have a healthy body, if possible. Be a good animal. That is Christian. Have a well disciplined will. This is the crown of character and Christ enables us to achieve it. Develop a sensitive conscience and cultivate the intellect. Art, music, painting, philosophy, literature, these are blossoms on the tree of freedom. Combine all these with a spiritual life, a practical useful life in the church of Christ.

All this is included in freedom. This is what sonship means. Thus Christ is trying to bring out all the possibilities in our natures. It is said of Chopin that he found the soul of the piano as no other player ever did, and gave it a distinct personality and individuality, so to speak. He discovered all the secrets, learned the hidden power in its strings, and set free all the harmonies of the instrument. After he found the soul of the piano he used it to find the human soul. Thus Christ calls forth all our powers and through us reaches the world. He sets us free and through us sets the world free.

(4) Freedom is measured by the size of the world in which you move.

Prof. Newcomb says if one would comprehend the vastness of the physical universe he would lie on his back on a bench or roof on a clear moonless night in autumn. The stupendous arch of the milky way will curve above him. Nearby will be the beautiful constellation Lyra, towards which our system is moving. There is the lovely blue star Vega. Southward is Altair, the bright star in Aquila. Westward Arcturus glitters, and eastward Aldebaran. Try to grasp somewhat the vast distances, the inconceivable motion, the ordered majestic swing and freedom of these matchless moving worlds, and indeed, as Prof. Newcomb says, there seems "no other way in which the weary mind finds complete rest from earthly anxiety and care."

Now Christ the eternal Son teaches the soul to lie on its back and drink in the vastness and wonder of the spiritual universe. He sets us free to roam in the utmost depths of the infinite. Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart

of man the good things God hath prepared for them that love Him in that vast universe.

There is the low narrow way of interpreting the world, and there is the broad free way. You may interpret the world in terms of the senses, as some one has said, and get a universe of colour; red, black, blue, brown; and of shape, round, square, long, short; and of tastes, bitter, sweet, sour. But that is after all a narrow universe. The soul beats its wings against the bars of sense. Or you can interpret the world in terms of intellect and get thought. For thought is stamped all over the universe, in the insect's eye, a bird's wing, and the construction of the solar system. Or you can interpret the universe in terms of heart and get love. For love plays like a dim flame even over the lower animal creation wherein the mother thrush gives her life for her young, or the lioness for her whelps. Or you can interpret the universe in terms of conscience and get righteousness. Written over nature is a law confirming the inward law of right and wrong, teaching the deep lesson:

"The air for the wing of the sparrow,
The bush for the robin and wren,
But always the path that is narrow
And strait for the children of men."

Or you can interpret the world in terms of the aesthetic faculty and get beauty. For:

"Nature beats in perfect tune
And round with rhyme her every nune
Whether she work on land or sea,
Or hides under-ground her alchemy.

Thou canst not wave thy staff in air,
Nor dip thy paddle in the lake,
But it carves the bow of beauty there,
And the ripples in rhymes the oar forsake."

Or finally, you can interpret the universe in terms of religion and get God. Thus you rise to the highest view of the world. Thus you find the highest freedom. Under God's tutelage, whose image you bear, you are taught on this little planet and trained to the most daring flights and eternity alone will suffice to give full play for our redeemed powers. When you get God all the other things come back again in new and glorified form, beauty, thought, colour, shape, and the rest. "Earth is crammed in heaven."

The prayer life lifts you to the stars—fellowship with God swings you out into the infinite spaces. Christian work enables you to partake of the rhythm and momentum and wondrous power of the moving worlds.

Before closing I must briefly indicate that the freedom which Christ gives through the truth requires a response on our part or it remains merely a name. That response, after faith is ours, and as a result of faith, includes four things: self-discipline, self-denial, self-direction and self-development.

Self-discipline. Train yourself to think right, and feel right and act right until the law of right is the law of your being. Men talk of the pleasure of self-indulgence. It is far below the joy of self-restraint. The musician is most free when he has acquired such skill in playing the piano that he forgets that he has any fingers.

Self-denial. This is the law of the cross and the

law of Christ. Self-denial is the law of the universe. Self-denial is the law of the planted seed which drops its dead integument and bursts into flower. Self-denial is the law of proficiency which enables the school-boy to accomplish his tasks and carry off the honours. Self-denial creates the statesman, the soldier and apostle. Self-denial is the law of the divine nature which gave His Son for the world. The way of self-denial is the way of self-realization and to freedom.

Self-direction. The free man is self-directed, but through an inward law. You cannot force the human will. God cannot force it. Freedom comes of the will directing itself into its own true life.

Self-development. Stagnation is slavery, not freedom. Freedom is not movement in space merely, else a rolling stone would be free. Freedom is not action only, but intelligent action, moral action, spiritual action. Freedom is the eternal movement of the soul towards God, through God's redeeming grace in Christ.

IX

THE SUPREME QUALITY IN HUMAN ACTIONS

Matthew 10:42—*"In the name of a disciple."*
—*"In the name of a prophet."*

THERE is one meaning in these two texts. Each text indicates that the value of the act lies in the motive, "In the name of a prophet," "In the name of a disciple."

I. Observe, first, the manner in which character is indicated by the nature of the act.

(1) It is a deed and not merely a profession of discipleship. It is right and proper to express religion in the form of a creed. Whoever thinks will desire to define religion for thought, or state its meaning and contents. It is of course right and proper to express religion in worship. Worship is natural and spontaneous to the devout spirit. And yet in creed and ritual the kernel of genuine religion may be wanting. On the stage an actor might easily encounter and defeat a stage tiger amid the plaudits of the spectators. But this would not tell of his real courage, or what sort of behaviour he would exhibit if he were to meet a real tiger in a jungle. So religion may be just pantomime, just stage acting. We may bow before the crucifix, or sing of the crucifixion, or preach a crucified Christ purely as pantomime,

without having the power of the cross within us at all. That is why the scriptures constantly call us back to the realities below the surface. "Pure religion (that is the pure ritual, the real worship) is to visit the fatherless and the widow." "Rend your hearts and not your garments" was the exhortation of an Old Testament prophet. "What doth Jehovah require? Ten thousand rams or rivers of oil? What doth he require of thee but to 'do justly and love mercy and walk humbly with thy God?'" In the scenes of heaven all is worship, and yet the temple has disappeared, as pictured in the book of Revelation. There is no temple needed for formal worship. All has become reality.

(2) We have here exhibited a Christian motive and not a selfish motive.

(3) We have deeds described best suited to make the motive clear. Human nature is likely enough to engage in an athletic contest, or social rivalries, or political struggles for the sake of the applause. But no one is likely to give a cup of cold water to the thirsty for the sake of a write-up in the next morning's paper.

Again we see the motive in receiving a prophet in the name of a prophet. There are two or three possible motives in receiving a prophet. We might receive him because he is a blood relation. This would not have any especial spiritual value. Or, we might receive him because he could cure our disease. We would thus be valuing him as we would a doctor's prescription. Or we might receive him because he could replenish our meal barrel as in the case of the widow. We would thus value him as we would so much land to produce meal, or so much money to

buy it. But it is to receive a prophet, in the name of a prophet, because he is a prophet, that has merit.

(4) We have a lowly act which includes the greater acts. There is a moral beauty, and even grandeur, in lowly acts which does not appear in those of a more imposing character. It is a happy touch of the author of "Ben Hur" where he permits the curtain which obscures all the early life of Jesus to part for a moment while the young man Jesus at Nazareth steps forth silently to slake the thirst of the Jewish captive whom the Romans are bearing away into bondage. The glimpse is imaginary, not historical, but somehow we feel it is true to life and harmonizes perfectly with all we know of Jesus. If, on the contrary, the author had painted the youth Jesus as performing some spectacular miracle or wonder, we should have been shocked.

We are not to suppose that corresponding value does not attach to greater deeds than giving the cup of water and showing hospitality to a prophet. The fact is the Scriptures reverse the mathematical principle that the greater includes the less. In moral and spiritual things the less includes the greater. "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much." "Thou hast been faithful in few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." The servant who sweeps under the mats when the mistress is out of sight will not be likely to neglect the more important duties. The theory that some men will continue honest so long as they handle hundreds or thousands of other people's money, but would become dishonest if they handled millions, is radically untrue. No man who is honest at all will steal in either case. If it is really the power of gravitation which causes the leaf

to flutter down to the ground from the twig of the tree, it is none the less the power of gravitation which hurls the boulder from the mountain side to the valley below. The mathematician can deduce the law of the sphere if truly seen in the dewdrop as well as in the planet. Mere size is a minor matter if the principle is found. Thus ever in genuine life and in real character, the little stands for the much. A Russian exile on account of his labours for liberty in a land of oppression, arrives in America. He goes to Mt. Vernon and picks up a pebble, and then to George Washington's boyhood home in Virginia and cuts a walking stick from the thicket, and these he keeps as mementoes of the land of freedom and of the great father of American freedom. In a sense these things are a better sign of his love of freedom than some great act might be. Being purely sentimental they reflect his deep passion for liberty in a visible and impressive way.

So also the Christian traveller goes to the Holy Land and brings back a souvenir from Jacob's Well where Jesus sat, wearied, and delivered his memorable sermon to the woman on eternal life. He brings back something made of olive wood from the spot in the garden of Gethsemane where Jesus endured the agony and bloody sweat, and he cherishes this in the true Christian spirit.

We say this is pure sentiment. But if genuine, it is far more. It may be the expression in a small way of a great passion and life devotion to Jesus Christ. Behind these things will lie a great and high appreciation of Christ. Not Jerusalem and Samaria alone will be sacred to him because Christ was there, but the whole planet will be dear to him, because

Christ came to it and died for it to redeem it, and longs and yearns for its salvation. All humanity will become sacred because Christ was a member of the race, and love and missionary service will go out, not to the advanced peoples alone, but also to the "lowborn, sullen peoples half demon and half child."

II. Having noted the lowly act and the character manifested therein, we consider next some truths which follow as conclusions therefrom.

(1) Note first the unity of the Christian spirit. Giving water in the name of a disciple is to be a disciple. Receiving a prophet in the name of a prophet is in essence the same as being a prophet. The woman of the Old Testament who had a prophet's chamber in her home for God's servant, was herself prophetic in her character. The poor Scotch woman who by hard labour and sacrifice saved $60.00 and gave it to David Livingstone, the missionary and explorer, to provide for him an African body servant, was potentially a Livingstone. And when the body servant thus obtained saved Livingstone's life from the attack of a lion, she had given Livingstone to Africa the remainder of his days. A box of clothing sent to frontier missionaries lifts the donors to the missionary plane, if the gift is in the name of a disciple and is born of appreciation of God's prophets on the frontier.

We need not be discouraged when we compare our lives with those of the great apostles Paul and Peter and John, or with those of Carey and Judson and Yates and Morrison, provided only their spirit animates us. Potentially we are apostles and missionaries if by our deeds we show appreciation of their work.

(2) The second conclusion from the text is the unity

of the Christian reward. "He that receiveth a prophet, in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward." The prophet's reward here is not what the prophet can bestow in return for favours done to him. It is rather the reward God will bestow on the prophet for his prophetic service.

Here is a very suggestive principle. In a sense it is greater to appreciate greatness than to be great. There may not be great merit in being great. God's gift of a great brain or heart does not imply merit. That comes only through the use we make of them. The three-year-old girl just reported in Germany who is a musical prodigy, playing from memory the greatest classical compositions, is a wonder; but there is scarcely more merit in her genius than there is in the mocking-bird which pours melody from its throat as a fountain sends out a stream of water. You do not think of merit in a rose for its beauty, or in the star for its brilliancy, or a nightingale for its note. Genius and talent are not merit. Merit comes of their use and improvement. Genius and talent are hard to consecrate because they call forth human applause. It is not easy to hear distinctly the inner voice of conscience when the thunder of outward applause is ringing in our ears; or to keep in the mind's eye the recording angel and his faithful pen when our performances are being exploited in flaring headlines in the daily press. Hence it is that the humble and unremembered man whose generous appreciation of the prophet makes him willing to unloose the latchet of his shoe, or hold open the door unrecognized while the other passes through, may thus perform an act of greater moral grandeur than the great man himself.

To applaud is morally nobler than to be applauded. It is the little and the sour nature, the shrivelled spirit which indulges in petty criticism. When Henry M. Stanley, the great African explorer, at his wedding in Westminster Abbey paused long enough on the way to the altar to lay a wreath of white flowers on the tomb of his great forerunner and predecessor, David Livingstone, he did a nobler act than the slaying of a lion would have been in the jungles of the dark continent.

The very crown of Christian character is this insight and appreciation of moral worth in others, coupled with a struggle to attain it. Character will blossom fully only thus. Heaven is in great measure simply appreciation of moral values outside of ourselves. John's picture of heaven is a scene of such appreciation. The redeemed host cast their crowns down at the feet of Him that sitteth on the throne and cry, "Holy, holy, holy," and also they say, "worthy is the lamb that hath been slain to receive glory and dominion." A man's place in the scale of moral worth is fixed by the homage which he pays to the moral ideal in Jesus Christ. His moral energy and vigour are determined by the power with which the moral law in Christ grips his life.

But some one asks, "Will the rewards of heaven be the same in all? Is that what you mean by the Christian reward?" Not at all. Because there are some who never rise to an appreciation of the highest and noblest. Their moral outreach is a limited one. They do not enter the prophet's passion, or the prophet's burden, and the prophet's purpose. They have moral appreciation on the lower levels but not on the higher. Their rewards will be on the level

of their appreciations though not even there perhaps absolutely the same with all.

(3) Observe finally the unity of the moral kingdom in Christ. The supreme merit of the cup of w[illegible] given in the name of a disciple, and of the service rendered the prophet in the name of a prophet, is that these are but a service rendered to Christ Himself. At the last judgment scene are the most remarkable words in Scripture, "Come ye blessed of my father," etc. Three remarkable things are to be noted about these words. One is the absence of blame. There were sins and failures and shortcomings in the record of every life before The Judge. Yet there is no mention of any of them. There is nothing but generous appreciation of them. It is the detection of moral worth on the part of the Judge, in his people.

A second remarkable thing is the absence of reference to His own service for them. There is Calvary in the background. There is the agony of the bloody sweat. There is the darkness and the expiation, the cruel nails and the spear and the bitter reproaches of the enemies about the cross, and the sense of abandonment and orphanhood. There is all that concentration of human hate and rage and the infinite worth of His atoning death which enabled these redeemed to stand there in His presence at the judgment scene. Yet we hear no mention of all this. Our appreciation of Christ's death was His desire.

The third remarkable thing here is His selection of the trivial acts and deeds as criteria of judgment. "Ye gave me meat, drink," etc. No wonder they are surprised at the words, surprised that He speaks not of brilliant and heroic achievements and historic

events, but only of feeding the hungry and kindred deeds.

I gather from all this the meaning that by reason of His union and identification with humanity, all humanity is sacred; and this, that service rendered to the least is service rendered to Him; and this, that all human conduct whether on a great or lowly scale, is rendered sacred by its reference to Him; and this, that our appreciation of worth in others is but a reflection of His appreciation of worth in others, that amid mines of gold and silver and diamonds and all other forms of wealth, men and women are God's chief asset, and that the service of man is but carrying forward the great and sublime undertaking of God in creating a universe, and who reached the climax of His work only when he said, "Let us make man."

X ✓

SONSHIP THROUGH SUFFERING, OR THE UNITY OF NATURE AND GRACE

Romans 8: 19–23—"*For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.*

"*For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope.*

"*Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.*

"*For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.*

"*And not only they, but ourselves also which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.*"

II Corinthians 5: 4.—"*For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.*"

THE nineteenth verse and the twenty-first verse of this chapter compared with the twenty-third verse, suggest our subject: We wish to compare the teachings of these two parts of Scripture and trace the very striking parallel which they contain.

I. Observe first then the unity of nature and grace as here set forth. We are not concerned at the present moment, as we shall be a little later, to dwell on the process of nature and the process of grace. We would emphasize at this stage the one point that nature and grace are in harmony. Paul takes a look at nature and finds that the whole creation is doing a particular thing. Then he takes a look at grace at work in Christians and finds that the same general process is going on.

God is like a player at a piano, so to speak. With one hand He plays on the human heart and conscience and will. With the other He plays on physical nature. These two are parts of the same great harmony, like one of Beethoven's compositions, the parts are all put together and continued on a principle of unity. Or we may say there is an antiphony between nature and grace, like the separated parts of a great chorus. The leader turns to nature and gives the signal and this part of the chorus responds. Then he turns to grace, the human world, the redemptive process, and this responds. The two are members of the one great chorus of God.

When Mr. Drummond wrote his book, "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," it was criticized for the attempt to identify the processes of nature and grace. For example, Drummond said that immortality was just the result of the operation of a natural law. If a perfect organism could find a perfect environment and if the organism could have uninterrupted correspondence with environment, eternal life would necessarily follow: a perfect fish in a perfect sea, and perfect correspondence, for example. The regenerated soul is the organism, he said, God is the environment, and

there is perfect and unbroken correspondence. The result is eternal life. The criticism of Drummond was partly correct. But while there may not be identity between the way nature acts and the way grace acts, there is agreement. There is harmony, and at some points the parallel is very close.

There is no conflict between science and religion. They simply look at the same object from different points of view. I saw a photograph recently of a handsome Kentucky home which is very familiar to me, yet I failed to recognize it at first. The pictures were taken from the end and gave a view of the *port cochère,* and not from the front with its fine row of columns. I was more familiar with the columns. Now science looks at nature from the *port cochère* side, and religion looks at it from the front. They do not contradict but only supplement each other. It is folly, therefore, for any one to set up antagonisms between genuine science and true religion. They cannot claim the beatitude of peace-makers, "Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God." We should rather enlarge our view to contain both. The world is like a great plant with the human soul as the blossom at the top. Science investigates the roots. Religion deals in the flower. The city of nature which science is building, which is coming up from below, has upon it the silver light of human reason. But it is not in conflict with the city of gold which is coming down from above with the light of revelation upon it. Science delves downward—religion looks up. But if science should dig deep enough she would come out under the same sky.

The text, it must be owned, emphasizes the agreement between nature and grace at a sombre point.

Nature groans, and grace groans. "The whole creation groaneth." "We groan." Groaning is a forbidding and disagreeable object. One is reminded of what a gentleman said: "A friend of mine the other day paid ten dollars to go to hear Patti sing. But in all my life I never heard of any one paying ten cents to hear another person groan."

But after all there are two kinds of groaning. There is the groaning of defeat and of loss, and of despair, the groan of the pessimist. But there is also the groaning of desire, of expectation and of hope. In prayer there is the groaning of deep desire. "The spirit himself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered." In the two texts it is the pain and anguish of desire, the yearning for higher, better things that causes the groaning. Some great and wonderful result is foreshadowed, some bright consummation, some wondrous goal. Let us therefore reserve our judgment, for the moment, as to the value of the groaning.

II. Notice next the reason for the painful process in nature. Nature groans because she is seeking by a process of her own to produce a result above nature. Nature groans because she is discontented with herself. Nature produces a crystal, we shall say, and I imagine her rejoicing over it. It is a beautiful thing, she says, but I want something higher. So she produces a flower, and she lingers over it, saying it is very good. But again a longing seizes her for something higher still, and she produces a bird, a winged creature. She goes on improving the type and rising higher in the scale of creation.

Now we are learning that one of nature's great secrets is the principle of pain and death. Without

death the world would be crowded with the lower creatures. The higher forms would have no standing room. They tell us that the golden eagle lives just long enough to promote the breed of eagles. They do not live too long lest their increase be beyond the food supply. Nor do they die too soon, lest the race of eagles become weakened and perish. The length of life seems to be determined by the law that nature is bent on producing the best, and strongest and most beautiful type of eagles. Death is necessary. Thus death, an angel in sombre robes and forbidding mien, enters on the fair creation of God. But what does death do? Death unlocks and unbars the gates of destiny and through it enters the angel of life in resplendent robes.

Now science agrees exactly with revelation in this that the fierce struggle between death and life is going on in creation, and that death is a servant of life. The aim throughout is to produce a being with greater life, and ever greater life. The aim is to produce finally an immortal being, a being which can never die. By the gradual conquest of death, death is slowly driven back. By and by a being—man—arises, who towers high above the animal and plant creation, with the light and glory of immortality upon his brow. In him will be achieved the final conquest of death.

What kind of a being, then, is this undying creature which stands forth as the crown of nature? We find the answer in Revelation. The first chapter of Genesis gives it. In the order of creation the grass came first among living things. Then came the fishes and the fowls and then the beasts, and finally, crowning the flight of the stairs of creation, stood man himself. Now the statement is made that God worked;

He laboured six days, and finally He rested. Evidently He was aiming at a definite result. He was engaged in producing a deathless being, and one which reflected back His own image. He did not rest until He had created a being whose nature was like a mirror into which God could look and see His own image reflected. All other created things were broken lights of Him. A gleam of Him appeared in the sunlight. Some of His beauty in the varied forms and colours of the world. A little spark of Him in the life of the lower creatures. But only in man does He find His complete image reflected and flashed back as a dew-drop flashes back the image of the sun, or as tall mountains around it are mirrored in the bosom of the lake. "The expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God."

Now both texts unite in the great conclusion. God was working and is working in nature and grace to produce a son, a race of sons and daughters, immortal and bearing His own image.

"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope.

"Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

"And not only they, but ourselves also which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

"For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

Both my texts agree in this that pain and death enter into the method and plan of God, that death ministers to life.

III. I observe next the reason for the painful process in grace. We have seen that the travail of nature is towards sonship, and that pain and death assist nature in the process. Now when God had crowned His creative work by producing man the immortal—sin entered. Man fell and death came as a penalty for transgression. Death took up the sceptre and reigned.

Shall God's work be destroyed? Shall the end of creation be defeated? No. Grace enters and begins the final conflict with death. But we groan even under grace. Pain and suffering still linger on the scene.

Now there are two possible reasons for the groaning of the creature. One is that the world about us is too great for us, as when birds and animals suffer and die in winter, or as when earthquakes or volcanoes overwhelm and destroy. But a second possible reason for the groaning of a creature is that we are too great for the world. Now this latter reason applies in the case of man. Man groans in his present environment. I mean especially redeemed man, because the world is too small for his powers. God has set the eternal in our hearts and the temporal and finite do not satisfy. Man's unrest and groaning, his pain and anguish, are the result of the unattained and the unsatisfied in human desire. Man says, and will ever say, "I am a

pilgrim, I'm a stranger here, I can tarry but a night." Heaven is my home. I feel the motions of sonship to the eternal God pulsing through my being. I have sorrows which heaven alone can heal. I have losses which eternity alone can compensate. I have a nature which reaches up and out to the infinite. It is the dignity of our nature as sons and daughters which brings unrest and groanings.

This explains why the saint sometimes envies the lower creatures. You remember the Psalmist, in exile and sorrow, thought the sparrow was better off than he. The little sparrow which made its nest unmolested and lived out its little life unafraid about the temple in Jerusalem, was to be envied by him whose thirst for the temple was so deep and so unsatisfied. This is a parable of all human life which is spent under the sense of sonship to God. The lower creatures probably know nothing of the kind of struggles we have.

To the squirrel we say in some of our moods: "Happy squirrel. You build your nest in a tree. You gather your store of nuts. You frolic in the sunshine. You tingle with physical health and the keen zest of living. Happy squirrel. You have no conscience which can keep you awake at night, and no imagination to forebode sorrows and loss. You are not perplexed whether or not your soul is immortal. You do not shiver and cower at the prospect of death. Happy squirrel!"

Perhaps it was this mood which led Shelley to write his matchless Ode to the Skylark, his own sense of the unattained, and the exuberance and bounding joy of the bird's life.

"Hail to thee, blithe spirit
Bird thou never wert
That in heaven or near it
Pourest thy full heart,
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

"We look before and after
And pine for what is not,
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught.
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

"In the golden lightning
Or the sunken sun
O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun."

The reason in each case is clear. Neither the sparrow nor lark nor squirrel has a sense of the unfulfilled. None of them grope and fumble at the lock in the mystery of existence. None can say:

"I seem to hear a heavenly friend
And through thick veils to apprehend
A labour working to an end."

All this squares with the conclusion we have reached. In nature and grace God is perfecting sons and daughters. The New Testament weaves its teaching around this idea at every point. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba,

Father." "Be ye therefore imitators of God as dear children." "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him."

IV. One step remains in our argument to round it out, and that is to show how pain and suffering are used. What can these do to make us sons? The answer is found in that principle which lies at the heart of the Gospel. Sonship comes first of all by faith and is developed by sacrifice and by a particular kind of sacrifice. There are several kinds of sacrifice.

There is unconscious sacrifice. One crop of weeds will give up their life that another may rise from the enriched soil. One set of forest trees will give place to another. In Denmark this has gone on. The aspen gave place to the birch; and this in turn to the fir; and this to the oak; and finally the beech displaced the oak and now reigns in the Danish forests.

Then, too, there is instinctive sacrifice. The mother bird and mother beast by an instinct of their natures yield up their lives for their young.

Among men there is much of involuntary sacrifice. Men suffer for the sins of others against their wills. The lives of a score are dashed out in a railroad wreck through the carelessness of a yardman who failed to look after a switch, and so in many other forms of involuntary sacrifice.

But the highest of all forms of sacrifice, and that which develops our sonship, is that which is voluntary. This was the kind Jesus practised when He came to earth. "Being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And

being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

This is the kind He would reproduce in us. This is the meaning of His words, "If any man would be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." It is the voluntary choice of the cross. And this: "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." And this: "Put to death therefore your members." It is the same principle of death, of pain. All men have burdens and tasks, but they are only dignified and glorified into crosses when voluntarily chosen.

Now the early stages of voluntary sacrifice are often painful. But the later ones are joyous because the principle becomes inwrought in character. Our early service to Christ, how painful! How it goes against the grain to confess Him, but by and by it gives us joy to make the brave stand for Him even among foes. Our early Christian work is often very irksome, but later it becomes a joy indescribable. Our early giving may pain us, but later the blessedness of it comes. Our early sorrows seem incurable, but finally they are mitigated at least and we know the beatitude, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Our doubts, too, how they gall us and make us groan. But after a while we get relief and comfort and can say:

"I see the wrong that round me lies,
I feel the guilt within,
I hear the groan and travail cries
The world confess its sin.

"Yet in the maddening maze of things
And tossed by storm and flood,
To one fixed stake my spirit clings,
I know that God is good.

"I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air.
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care."

But the end of the process is spontaneous sacrifice, spontaneous love, and this is the divine element in character. Sonship matures when sacrifice becomes voluntary. Character ripens when it is painful to be unloving. We become sons when we spontaneously imitate God. Thus we see the uses of the groaning; thus we understand the service of the angel of pain and the angel of death. It is to lead us to the conquest of death and pain until we know the full meaning of the words, "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed," and of this, "the liberty of the glory of the sons of God."

Now God is seeking to train us into appreciation of His method. He desires our cooperation. He yearns over us and desires most of all that we shall respond to Him, and yield ourselves up to Him. He sees all the possibilities of our nature. He is striving to develop them. He would enrich us and enlarge our capacities to their full limit. This He will do without fail if we respond and cooperate in faith and love.

In conclusion, what do we see as the issue of all? We see that the dark shadows that lie across the face of nature have as their end the making of sons of God, and that the dark shadows which hover over

the process of grace have the same end in view. Through pain and sorrow, through the long dark vale of life, with its cruel briars and sharp stones, fares the man whom God is making into a son. But he goes not unattended. Grace holds him by the right hand, and nature by the left. Thus he is led upward out of the shadows as a son to meet God's eternal Son, our elder brother, Christ, whom God sent to redeem us. And, lo, the redeemed Son looking into the glorified face of the redeeming Son discovers in that face the moral likeness of his own purged and purified nature, and discovers in Christ the author and perfecter of his own faith.

XI

CHRIST'S CHALLENGE TO MANHOOD

(*A sermon to young men.*)

Luke 9:62—*No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.*"

I LIKE the homely beauty of the plough as an illustration of the heroic life. Elsewhere Jesus sets out the same idea under a military figure. But a part of the military hero's victory belongs to the applauding public, which stimulates him to conquer. There is little in the ploughman's work of itself, however, to inspire heroism. The task is lonely, hard and lowly. For that very reason it is one of the hardest sayings of Jesus. Because it is a hard saying, I bring it to you. I scorn the type of Christianity which thinks to attract young men by setting up an easy goal of endeavour. I would not so insult their manhood.

In the other sayings of Christ in this passage He is sifting men by an eternal standard. To the impetuous and thoughtless and would-be disciple He says, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven nests; but the son of man hath not where to lay his head." To the reluctant who would go first and bury his dead, He says, "Let the dead bury their dead, but go and publish abroad the kingdom of God." And to this one who wished to pay a farewell visit to his home

Jesus says: "No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

In all this Christ is simply putting the unerring finger of boundless wisdom upon the weak spot in human character. He is equating manhood over against the kingdom of God. His words are like a strong wind blowing through a forest, which lays the weak trees level with the earth, but leaves the strong in greater strength, or like a raging flame which destroys all that is inflammable and purifies the rest.

And yet no teacher ever made achievement so attractive, or quickened the human spirit to a keener realization of the joys of triumph. No one ever gave such a tonic to the will, or lured to greater heights. No one ever honoured manhood and the will to live and do by setting it to tasks so worthy. He estimated manhood too highly to be content with anything but a worthy goal and effort. He loves us too much to be willing that we should set our powers to a task too low. Hence from my text I get this subject, Christ's Challenge to Manhood.

I. Notice, first, Christ's challenge to the choice of manhood: putting the hand to the plough.

Now this choice to which Christ throws out the challenge implies three things. One is

The reality of the divine Kingdom.

The fitness of which He speaks is a fitness for the Kingdom of God. Does a man accept the fact of a world of spiritual realities? There is one side of the modern spirit which denies that anything is a fact unless you can see it or touch it. It must be a mass of matter in some form to pass muster as belonging to the real world. The ocean with its burden of the

world's commerce is a fact. The Simplon tunnel, running fourteen miles through the Alps, connecting the traffic of Italy and Northern Europe; the Matterhorn, piercing the clouds with sharp point, like a flying shaft of granite, hurled from a subterranean catapult, fourteen thousand feet into the air; the planets, the sun in the heaven yonder; these are facts, men say, because they are bulky and vast.

But the choice of the plough of the Kingdom implies belief in a higher set of facts. One of these is conscience, man's sense of right and wrong, obligation, duty, righteousness. Another is brotherhood, man's kinship to all other men; still another is immortality, an endless existence in a future world. These are also facts, realities. Moral conviction is like the Alpine mountain range running through all human experience. The belief in immortality is a cloud-piercing peak which rises like a Matterhorn out of that conviction; while man's assurance that Death does not end all runs like a tunnel through the barrier on the bounds of life, since Christ came forth a conqueror of death. The fact of God is the universal conviction of man, the sun in his spiritual heaven. The choice, of a merely commercial or political career, implies belief in a Kingdom of commercial and political forces, but these in turn rest upon the higher world of moral and spiritual realities. The universe is the Kingdom of God.

(2) This choice implies also the acceptance by man of a birthright and destiny in this Kingdom. One has well said, "The purpose of God in creation did not appear until the dust stood erect in the form of a man." Man as we know him is the crown of Nature, and Christ is the crown of humanity. God and man

meet in Christ. He who was the effulgence of the Father's glory, and the image of His substance, is also the archetype of humanity. His challenge to the choice of the plough is the challenge to the pursuit of this ideal forever. The eternally forward look of him who putteth his hand to the plough means nothing less.

(3) Christ's challenge to the choice of the plough implies also an appeal to the element of sovereignty in man. The plough must be freely chosen. Others were equally free, but not fit. One went to bury his dead or to bid good-bye to his friends. They were free but not fit. Christ seeks those who are free and fit.

In a word of wondrous import we read in the Gospel of John: "He that hath received him, hath set his seal to this, that God is true." Now a seal is a King's means of making a document authoritative and final. The individual is a King, a sovereign. This element of sovereignty is the whole Key to man's nature and dignity. It is God's image in us. Everything great which happens to a man comes through his sovereign choice. The value of a thing for any man depends upon his own sovereign choice of it, the moral and spiritual choices especially. Hence everywhere the Scriptures represent salvation, sonship, life, as coming through human choice. These great things cannot be given merely, they must be appropriated. "To as many as received him, to them gave he power (authority) to become the sons of God." One of the most striking of all the instances of the exercise of this freedom of a created will is in the words which, in the *Drama of Exile,* Mrs. Browning puts into the mouth of Satan when he boasts that he is a part of God's universe

and is yet neither God nor His servant. Nothing more fearful than that can well be imagined. By emphasizing the necessity of human choice, I have no thought of calling in question man's need of grace in all his supreme choices. But God's grace shows itself in the human choice of the good. That is its true aim and result.

Now there are two kinds of doubt which may be in the way of the choice of the plough of Christ. One is active and the other passive doubt. Here again we see how directly Christ's challenge is to manhood. The passive doubter is the one who has surrendered to the material world, who has not the heroism to plunge into the world of spirit and grapple with its stupendous problems. Passive doubt is the doubt of the indolent, the weary, the unaspiring. Active doubt will brook no defeat. It is morally in earnest. It looks steadfastly and steadily into the universe as a whole.

We are witnessing a marvellous thing in our day among the doubters. By what seems to be an inevitable gravitation, or spiritual law, the morally earnest, the active doubters, are gradually ranging themselves around Christ. They may not wholly accept all His claims at first; but they discover in the plough of His appointment the real call to the career of a true man. The morally earnest and strenuous life Christ inspires above all others. And as criticism cuts and slashes at the records of His earthly life, whether with good or evil intent, His figure is but the more completely liberated, and the beauty and winsomeness of His face attract men with irresistible power.

And in following Him what do they find? They find that the light grows brighter. The tangle and mystery of existence pass gradually away and they find

that only the selfish and the sensual and those chained to the trifling and petty pursuits and aims are the blind. They find that the great aim gives the vision of God; that:

"Earth is crammed with
And every common bush aflame with God,
But only they that see it take their shoes off,
The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries,
And daub their faces more and more from the first similitude."

They find, in short, that if a man use his freedom to follow the impulse to go and bid his friends good-bye and thus miss the greater choice and destiny, he will remain in the shadowland of doubt, while another by grasping with vigour the plough of spiritual destiny enters at once into an enlarged career whence arises no faintest desire to look back.

II. I notice in the second place Christ's challenge to manhood's task, and that is simply the task of the plough.

The plough, of course, is a figure, a parable which we must interpret. Evidently it sums up duty and destiny from Christ's point of view. We may sum up the symbolism of the plough briefly.

The plough certainly stands for the idea of unity of effort and purpose. Now what sort of unity does the plough suggest? The forward look stands for moral idealism, the conviction of that higher Kingdom of which I spoke a few moments ago. The ploughshare that pierces the resisting earth stands for the conditions under which we must labour for the ideal. The plough then represents the task of unifying the spiritual with

the natural, of bringing the divine down into the human, the task of the plough is the task of the practical idealist.

In Raphael's picture representing the school of Athens, Plato is pointing upward. He is the abstract idealist. In the same picture Aristotle is represented as pointing downward. He is the concrete idealist. Now the plough of the Christian undertaking is the parable of the union of the two, abstract and concrete idealism, and yet in a sense higher than either Aristotle or Plato ever knew. But this unifying task we must consider more in detail.

It goes, of course, without saying, from the preceding remarks, that man's task is supremely moral. To tunnel mountains and build railroads, to erect factories and build cities—this is not man's chief task, though a noble part of it. Huxley, who cared little for Christianity in the ordinary sense, recognized the necessity and importance, nay, the primacy of the moral interest above all others. How to be good was to him the supreme task of man. He said that if he could make a contract with some beneficent and mighty power which could take his nature every morning and wind it up like a clock, so that he would inevitably think right thoughts and do right things, he would close with the offer at once. Ah, if he could have not only admired Christ's ideal, but have yielded to His authority, he would have found in Him, not a key to wind him up mechanically, but a divine and inspiring personal force to quicken all the powers of his being into new moral energy. The plough then stands for the unity and the steadfastness of moral effort under earthly conditions.

This suggests another unity involved in man's task,

and that is of man's higher and lower natures, his soul and his body under moral law. It is to take all the so-called lower side of normal human life and exalt it to the plane of the highest. The ploughshare runs through the fleshly desires and lusts, it rips up the bestial and the base, and tills it into a fruitful harvest field. In the Cologne Cathedral in Germany hangs a bell which, in and out of season, sounds forth the praises of God. It is made of cannon captured from the French, by the Germans, which in 1870 were trained against the city. So must the lower part of us, the hostile part, be captured and made to serve the spirit's interests. It is no dishonour, but the glory of man to have a strong body. But there is but one task of the body, and Browning gives it. It is this: "How far can my body project my soul along its heavenly way?" We are shut up to one or the other of the two philosophies: Man is either a moral being with manhood to win, or else he is simply a hungry animal, reckless of the lives of others, running up and down the earth to satisfy his appetite. The forward look of the spiritual ploughman means simply this: unite the forces of your nature, put all the parts together and rise to an imperial spiritual manhood in Christ.

The plough suggests another aspect of our great moral task, viz.: that Christianity is more than a gift. It is also an achievement. There are three forms of righteousness taught in the New Testament. First imputed righteousness, which means that when a man accepts Christ, God forgives him and accepts him. The second is imparted righteousness, which means that by His Spirit God communicates a new moral and spiritual life to man, regeneration. The third is at-

tained righteousness. Man must win righteousness by effort, after the other forms of it are given to him. We must work out what God has wrought in us.

There are two conceptions of the Christian life which I despise. One makes it a melancholy pilgrimage through a low ground of sorrow; the other in a shallow way treats it as an expenditure of energy in trivialities. One regards life as a funeral procession; the other as a game of tiddle-de-winks. Not so Jesus, not so Paul. Life is a triumphant battle. Character is a thing to be conquered. We are to climb a ladder of fire to eternal moral heights and up that steep and flaming way none but heroic feet can climb, and yet when on the ladder once, the fiery foothold has no power to scorch and burn, but only to purify. Such climbers Jesus calls. And to-night, young men, I fling out His challenge to you, and I would despise myself, and I would fail in true respect for you if I should make it easy.

The furrow of the plough of your moral purpose is not merely individual. It is also social. Man by himself is not a man. You are called to social service. You are a part of the organic social life of your age. The field which you are tilling with your plough of endeavour is for the support of your brothers as well as yourself. Young gentlemen, the politics of your times needs you. Commercial life needs you. Modern business too often melts and coins the golden rule into the golden dollar, and politics too often converts public office and civic righteousness into means for satisfying the hunger of the beast of greed. Education needs you. Never has there been a more splendid opening for the forces of intelligence than to-day. Ideas rule the world as never before. The Christian enterprise

needs you. The Christian ministry needs many of you, and that noblest of all the chivalries, the missionary enterprise, calls for men. A student volunteer convention was recently held. Thousands of the pick of young manhood and womanhood from every quarter of the land were there. For days they deliberated not over any commercial or military enterprise, not even over football or baseball, though doubtless there were experts in both games present; but over the question how could they extend a helping hand to their brothers and sisters in China and Africa and India, who are less fortunate than they. They heard Christ's challenge and leaped to the plough.

Now this personal and social task demands courage. President Roosevelt when police commissioner in New York early in his career, rigorously enforced the Sunday law against saloons, and the Tammany tiger, of course, growled and struck out madly. Tammany called a great meeting, where addresses and denunciations were to be delivered. Roosevelt, the object of all this wrath, was present on the platform. The average civic executive would have been somewhere in hiding in these circumstances. But the young police commissioner made the first speech of the meeting, told them that he meant to enforce the law, good or bad, as long as it remained on the statute book. If it was bad, repeal it; but as for him he was in office to serve the cause of righteousness. As usual, courage and manhood conquered the beast. There are acute judges who think that speech was the first note in Roosevelt's career which indicated his fitness for the White House.

I long for a return to this energetic, practical Christianty. It will save us from two perils. One is the

peril of a barren dogmatism, and the other from the peril of a one-sided mysticism. For one I am a believer in a sane and Biblical doctrine. Christianity cannot be set forth otherwise. Moreover, I am a mystic. I believe in the direct touch of the human soul with God. But I am also aware that in mere mystic star-gazing a man may trample under foot the rights and claims of brotherhood and justice; and that by means of barren dogma one may construct a coffin and a winding-sheet for all spiritual life. Unless mysticism is a gale of refreshment blowing from heaven to cool the brow of the worker, and unless dogma be made a ploughshare, cutting the furrow of practical endeavour, then both are vain and empty.

Of course the plough symbolizes a life task under conditions of resistance. The earth is a sluggish medium in which to labour, and there are rocks and roots and difficulties everywhere. But who except the sluggard would have it otherwise? Work is the law of man's being. Achievement is a condition of human happiness. The man who is mentally or physically or morally lazy cannot triumph in Christ's Kingdom—nor, for that matter, in any other Kingdom.

Yes, resistance is the unfailing condition of a life task that is worth while. Temptations there are all along the way. The temptation, for example, to forsake the straight way of gaining the world for the crooked way; the temptation to drop the plough handles and spend the time resting in the friendly shade of the trees. There is the peril of inherited wealth, that it may make a man a mere parasite in the body politic. There is the temptation that we be overcome by pain and loss and sorrow, or by lust and selfishness. These are stout foes, this is caked and crusted and

stubborn soil; but forget not your plough song, no matter how sore the conflict or loneliness. Nobility of character is seen in nothing better than in the steadfast pursuit of a high purpose in spite of sorrow and pain. We do not always know what is at the end of the furrow. There was One who saw a cross there, and darkness and anguish. Yet the vision of the cross did not hinder one deed of kindness. Its bitter cup did not add one note of bitterness to His words, but rendered them only the kindlier. This is the meaning of Browning's weird poem, "Childe Rolande to the Dark Tower Came." Across scenes of desolation and death, into the region where the anathemas of Nature seemed to brood and blight, the Knight rode dauntlessly on. At length, into the forbidding tower, amid hopelessness and despair, he plunges while his horn sounds an exultant and triumphant note. Deathless tenacity of purpose, ah, this is almost the supreme trait of manhood.

Success is not so much an event in a man's life as a trait of character. I heard the other day of a man who almost succeeded in everything; but really failed in everything. He fled from each set of circumstances to another less refractory. He permitted circumstances to conquer his will until he discovered with dismay that every set of circumstances is about as refractory as every other. Failure thus became a trait of character, not an incident of endeavour. Likewise success may become a trait of character. Indeed, the whole significance of the plough is will against circumstance, manhood against matter, personality against the universe. The world assumes that you are clay and that it is potter until you demonstrate that you are potter and the world is clay.

It was always so. He who falters and loses heart under the pressure of the forces of evil lacks imagination. I like the painter who made a picture representing Hope sitting as a harper. The surroundings were a scene of ruin and desolation, all that was fair had passed. The strings of the harp were all broken except one. Yet over this one string Hope sat absorbed in its sweet sound, determined thus to shut out and become dead to the reign of ruin around.

This, however, is not the situation to-day. The harp of Hope has many strings. One is philosophy. Materialism is dead among speculative thinkers, in very large measure. Haeckel is a voice crying in a wilderness to his idealistic and spiritualistic philosophical contemporaries without a repentant sinner to baptize in the name of his Monistic Messiah, Matter.

Science also adds a string to the harp of Hope. She does not dogmatize as formerly about things beyond her realm. She has already tunnelled through Nature, up close beneath the gates of the eternal city. The world of science has no meaning without God. The city of Nature coming up from below is now seen to be but a suburb of the city of God coming down from above.

There are other strings to the harp of Hope in the social and religious forces of the times. A sense of right and justice is once more conquering its way into our thinking. There are still heroes in public and political life who spurn the muck-rake and the pigsty of greed and graft. The human spirit is still capable of moral indignation against wrong. There yet remain prophets in the land, men of ardent spirits who are stung into action by the touch of evil.

Now I assert that with these forces at work he

that putteth his hand to the plough has much to hearten and encourage him. No land is given over to sordidness with these forces actively at work. They proclaim eloquently that God has put His hand to the plough, and that harnessed to the plough of our human endeavour are the colossal energies of the universe. The tides and the stars are on our side, and the angels of the divine decrees protect the harvest field of our effort from the ravages of man and beast and wind and weather.

III. We come to our third topic: The plough is the challenge to manhood's eternal forward look. "He who putteth his hand to the plough and looketh back is not fit." The echo of the eternal is in these words. Christ is here appealing to the love of the eternal in the human spirit. Man never completes his tasks. It is his peculiarity that he is never content. He sees a vision in the marble. He executes it as best he may, and then destroys his work and begins again.

The power of recovery is a fine test of character. Chicago with its fire; Charleston with its earthquake; Galveston with its flood; Baltimore with its conflagration, and San Francisco with its earthquake and fire—all these calamities looked at on one side seem to demonstrate the futility of all human endeavour. Properly understood they are God's challenge to man. The manhood of tenderness and love that responds to the need and sends swift aid; the manhood and womanhood of endurance that survives with good cheer the awful cataclysm; the manhood of faith that believes in spite of appearances; and the manhood of strength that recovers poise and purpose and builds again.

The eternally forward look. Yes, this is the human

look, this is man's destiny. Man's task was never done, and thank God it never will be done. Man despises what he has conquered, and that is why Christ is his eternal goal. He can never be transcended.

The ploughshare pierces through time into eternity, and the widening horizon of man's destiny will confront him for ever. Jesus the goal will eternally lead the way to new fields. "I go to prepare a place for you," is eternally true of Him. And this means that heaven will be a place for work as well as earth. Only the earthly loafer desires that heaven shall be a loafing place.

All this of course implies the greatness of God and His universe and the expansive capacity of man. There has been much speculation as to where heaven is. Is it to be this planet? Or a distant star or constellation? Perhaps both views are correct and the universe will be our sphere. The freedom of the universe will be ours, it may be, and the questions raised by our science and our philosophy in time will find progressive solution in eternity. This little planet is simply God's training ground for us, an eagle's nest on a brow of one of the cliffs of eternity, where we, the young eagles, are for a time secure, and whence we launch and try our wings. Our eagle nature demands to range and soar; our eagle eye makes bold to look away into the sun itself for inspiration, and dares to make the plunge through boundless space.

This is Christ's challenge to the human spirit. His appeal to manhood. In the light of His challenge to the eternally forward look, the blindness and folly and sin of limiting the vision to time and space, to a mere earthly career become apparent.

XII

CHARACTER ADORNING CALLING AS SEEN IN THE LIFE OF GEN. R. E. LEE

Ephesians 4: 1—*"Walk worthy of your calling."*
Romans 1: 7—*"Called to be saints."*

THIS the birthday of R. E. Lee, one of the greatest, noblest and purest of Americans, I follow Scripture example in using the high character of a saintly man to impress the truths of the Gospel.

Lee's character appeals to men of the North as well as the South, just as Southerners have come to admire and love the character of Abraham Lincoln. I am sorry for the moral blindness of any Southerner who cannot see virtue or excellence in the great men of the North, and I am equally sorry for the blindness of any Northerner who can see no beauty, no virtue in the heroes of the Confederacy. To ask the question whether Lee's statue is worthy of a place by the side of the great leaders of the North is, to me, like asking whether Arcturus is worthy of a place in the same firmament with Aldebaran, whether Orion brings reproach to the Pleiades, and whether the North Star is tarnished because in the same heavens glows the Southern Cross.

The two texts suggest the relations between character and calling. These should match each other. Character is the voice that sings the song; calling is

the accompaniment on the instrument. Every man should learn to combine the two in a beautiful harmony. Christ came to teach men a song, and to set men a task. It is when you learn to sing with your hand and work with your song that you successfully unite the two.

The following things are necessary in order that calling may match character and character adorn calling. These things I am about to name were fulfilled in the life of Abraham, and David, of Peter, of John and Paul, of Alfred the Great, George Washington, and R. E. Lee. I state these qualities in the form of practical admonitions for ourselves.

(1) Fall into God's plan for you. As a picture fits a frame, as a bird fits its nest, as a swan fits the lake on which it swims, or as the lake its bed, or a planet slips along its appointed orbit, so the greatly successful life fits into God's plan for it. It is vain to resist God. Obedience is the first law of our being. Lee was a great example of obedience to God's law for his life. No man obeys perfectly. Lee was not perfect. But in its great outline and onward sweep his career obeyed a divine impulse.

(2) Believe with all your heart that you can fulfil your calling and also please God. It is a fatal mistake to imagine that religion and practical life are incompatible. A young man said to me, "No man can sell dry goods and also be a Christian." He was mistaken. Every human life can obey two laws, the law of earthly duty and of obedience to God. The magnetic needle obeys the law of the ship. For when the ship changes its course, the needle turns on its axis. Otherwise it would be useless. But the needle also obeys the law of the electric current. For in

all its turning on its pivot, it keeps pointing steadily to the pole. Without this also it would be useless. The earth rotates on its axis. Otherwise one hemisphere would freeze and the other perish of heat. But the earth also revolves around the sun, else it would soon be dashed to destruction in its wanderings through space. Lee's career rotated and revolved. It swung on its axis and served men. It pointed ever to the pole of duty. Prayer was real to him as bread. Faith was as vital a process as breathing.

(3) Accept the conditions of your life with cheerfulness. This is the meaning of the "yoke" of Christ; "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me," is His command. It was a master stroke of character for Lee to rise above the wreck of his fortunes into the serenity and triumph of his last days. But his trained and disciplined spirit was equal to the task.

(4) Do with your might what your hands find to do. This was a conspicuous trait in Lee. "This one thing I do," was the law of his activity, whether as young soldier in Mexico, or as Commander of the Confederate forces, or as president of Washington College. Every ounce of his being went to every great task. He knew no half-hearted service. "A whole man to one thing at a time," was his ideal of service.

(5) Adorn your calling by Christian character. This is the summary of Lee's life. A man can use calling to degrade character, or use character to glorify calling. A man's calling is like a ladder. On it he can climb down or up. By our calling we should get on in the world, but by our character we should get above the world. We should get on, but certainly we should get up.

Lee's character was not stained by contact with

corruption. There is a certain white flower which grows in the shaft of the coal mine. It is covered with an enamel which enables it to shed the coal dust which constantly falls upon it, itself remaining white and clean. Lee's character had such an enamel. The inspiration of his life was from above, not below. The impulses to action were from within, not without. The ideal of his life was future, and not past. "He looked up and not down; out and not in; forward and not backward, and it was the law of his life to lend a hand."

Every man is called to be a saint. A saint is not a glorified being in heaven, nor a bloodless anchorite living on a dry crust in a cavern, nor an official wearing ecclesiastical robes. A saint is a man set apart to duty, consecrated to God and right, grappling with his foes, doing his work, enduring hardship, climbing the rugged hill of manhood with the eye fixed on an eternal goal.

We may now glance at a few traits of Lee's character with which he adorned his calling. I am not dealing with Lee as a soldier, but as a man and a Christian. His courage I need not dwell upon. His magnanimity is beyond all question. His lofty idealism breathes through all his letters, in his hours of sorrow, in his conduct in private life, and in his military papers. A few things I name more in detail.

The first is his *self-restraint.* It appears in the quiet poise and balance always manifest in his bearing; in the absence of false pride or the spirit of boasting in the hour of victory; in his special orders to the soldiers on the famous Gettysburg march against lawlessness and destruction of property in the enemy's country, when he might have retaliated on the Penn-

sylvanians for ravages committed by some Northern armies in the South. It is seen in the absence of bitterness and the sweetness of his spirit in defeat; in the counsel which he gave at the surrender, urging all Southerners to accept the tragic issue of the war in the spirit of obedience to the decree of Providence; and in his counsel against guerrilla warfare, which might have been continued indefinitely by the Southern soldiers. It is seen in the quiet self-respect and dignity which marked his conduct throughout the period after the war, when, denied the privilege of citizenship, he remained a prisoner of war on parole until his death. This lofty soul seemed to be gazing forever upon some fixed star out of the sight of ordinary men whose rays were so bright and steadfast and whose position in the sky was so fixed and unchangeable that he was brought under its mystic power and made to share its steadfastness and partake of its beauty.

I name also his tenderness. When, in the midst of the busy activities of war, surrounded by officers awaiting orders, while the air about them is being punctured with the enemy's bullets, he is seen to leave the place where he was standing and tenderly lift an unfledged sparrow from the ground, back into the nest whence it had fallen, we are made to feel that he had caught the spirit of Him of whom it was said: "Not a sparrow falleth without your father in heaven."

When again, as president of Washington College, upon a great occasion, he is seated on a platform along with other dignitaries of various kinds, and orators are addressing a great assembly—when, I say, under these circumstances we see a little lad, unconscious of time and place, and bold in the confidence of love,

go to the platform and climb up into Lee's lap and lay his head on his knee and fall asleep without let or hindrance from the master of ceremonies, and really at the cost of some discomfort on his part, we are convinced that he knows the secret tenderness and love of Him who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

A student boasted that the president could not make him cry as he did the other fellows who were called in for admonition for neglect of duty. But he soon returned blubbering like a child, saying, "He made me ashamed of myself when he told me of my mother and her love and sacrifice for me, and I could not stand it."

He had a tender heart. If he ever committed serious errors as a general it is likely that they were due to his tender regard for subordinates in command who were slow to obey orders.

"When nature was shaping him, clay was not granted
For making so full-sized a man as she wanted,
So to fill out her model a little she spared
From some finer grained stuff for a woman prepared,
And she could not have hit a more excellent plan
For making him fully and perfectly man."

The one word writ large in letters of fire all over his life was the great word—duty. The passion to do the right thing and not the wrong thing is what made him great. "In all the universe there is nothing great but man, and in man there is nothing great but mind," is a memorable saying. But the greatest thing in mind is conscience. Lee had an inviolable conscience. The sense of duty swayed his being in sov-

ereign power. As a young man in the Mexican war we see him drudging at maps and plans of battle at times when other young officers were enjoying themselves, and refusing to join them until his task was done—from a sense of duty. He deplored the Civil War and said if he owned all the slaves he would set them free in order to avoid the conflict, and then buckled on the sword and went to war—from a sense of duty. He refused to give countenance to a plan to promote his own son to a post for which he was unfit—from a sense of duty. From a sense of duty he turned a deaf ear to overtures to become governor of Virginia, asserting his lack of confidence in "military statesmen" as well as "political generals." From a sense of duty, at the end of the war, he bowed to God's will and became a valiant moral hero in promoting peace, as he had been a military hero in promoting war. From a sense of duty he accepted the presidency of a College on a pitiably small salary when offers of positions paying from ten thousand to fifty thousand dollars per annum were open to him.

This splendid idealism is none too common in public life to-day. Of course there are many men who are swayed by great ideals, unpurchasable, uncompromising men. But there are also too many who are quick to seize the main chance, who lean to the side of self when in doubt. Happy is the man who, like Lee, had few moral struggles because his moral ideals were so clean and whose will was so strong. Happy is the man who is quick to see and quick to shun the wrong and equally quick to see and do the right.

This man's unselfishness reads almost like a romance in an age when greed and grasping are so com-

mon. Think of it, an English estate was offered him and an income of fifteen thousand dollars per year. Pride would forbid acceptance of this, of course. But ten thousand dollars a year was offered for the use of his name by an Insurance Company. He indignantly inquired if they thought his name and influence could be bought at any price. He declined fifty thousand dollars per year when offered him to become the head of a business concern.

Hon. B. H. Hill of Georgia was not wrong when he said in an address: "When the future historian comes to survey the character of Lee, he will find it rising like a huge mountain above the undulating plain of humanity, and he will have to lift his eyes towards heaven to catch its summit. He possessed every virtue of the great commander without treachery; a private citizen without wrong; a neighbour without reproach; a Christian without hypocrisy; a man without guile. He was a Cæsar without his ambition; a Frederick without his tyranny; a Napoleon without his selfishness, and a Washington without his reward. He was obedient to authority as a servant and loyal in authority as a true King. He was gentle as a woman in life; modest and pure as a virgin in thought; watchful as a Roman vestal in duty; submissive to law as Socrates, and grand in battle as Achilles." (Life of Lee by J. W. Jones, p. 396.)

When we look at the grand old man at the close of the war and in his last years, there is something infinitely pathetic in his figure. It is set against the background of a ruined South which stretches away from the Potomac to the Gulf, blackened by the cinders of extinct homes and cities, and presenting everywhere a scene of desolation and of death. Yet when

we look again there is something unspeakably grand in that figure. His last years are not like those of a defeated man; but like those of a victor. Moral triumph sits upon his brow and moral grandeur shines at every point. He rides in a golden chariot whose name is duty. Its wheels are truth and righteousness. The steeds which draw it are love to God and love to man. The weapons of his warfare are faith and integrity. He is driving, ever driving with his face towards the sunrise. The light of the eternal dawn is upon his brow. When the chariot wheels stopped, and the warrior laid down his lance and folded his hands in death, no doubt angels were waiting and bore him to the presence chamber of the King on high whom he had loved and served so well.

Trust God and do right is the supreme lesson of Lee's life. The secret of victory in our life as a whole, whatever be the defeats along the way, is to be found in taking God into our lives and making it our supreme calling to serve Him. Thus we shall conquer every foe, including the last enemy, death.

"Ere we do our heavenly best, a God must mingle in the game,
There may be those about us whom we neither know nor name,
Felt within us as ourselves, the powers of good, the powers of ill,
Strewing balm or shedding poison in the fountains of the will.
Follow light and do the right, for man can half control his doom,
Till you see the deathless angel seated in the vacant tomb."

In Newton Centre, Massachusetts, in the tower of the church of which I was once pastor, is a beautiful chime of bells. The Sabbath mornings are so quiet its sweet notes can be heard everywhere as they ring in the worship with "Nearer my God to thee," or other familiar tune. Often I have caught myself, and others likewise, joining unconsciously and in an undertone, humming or singing "Nearer my God to thee" with the chime. Lee's life was such a chime, a harmony, a benediction, drawing men nearer to his God. When he died it was the ceasing of a silver chime, but its echoes will not die until human influence ceases to be a quality upon earth.

XIII

ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER

Romans 8: 28—"*All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.*"

THIS text is at the same time one of the most difficult to accept, one of the most astonishing, one of the most comforting and glorious in the Bible. It is too great to be unfolded in the time allotted to a sermon. It requires a lifetime to begin to grasp its meaning. We may only touch upon a few of its many phases. The text really analyzes itself, and falls into natural divisions. I, with many others who have employed it as a text, will let it divide itself.

I. Let us sum up its meaning then in a number of general statements.

First, the universe is active, "All things work."

Second, the universe is active with a purpose, "All things work together." They co-operate towards a common end.

Third, the universe is moral, "All things work together for good."

Fourth, the universe is religious, a God is behind the movement. "All things work together for good to them that love God."

Fifth, the effect of the action of the universe upon us is determined by our attitude towards God, whether we love Him or not.

Now let us go back over some of these statements and enlarge them a little.

The universe is active. "All things work." The smallest things work. The atoms work. They join hands with each other to form plants and crystals and rocks and planets. The grain of sand works; it binds its neighbours to it by the attractive power of gravitation. It coheres within by inherent force. Its mass and weight, minute as it is, affects the centre of gravity of the earth on which it rests. The dewdrop works. It condenses out the moisture of the atmosphere and evaporates again; but meantime it has whispered a message of life to the struggling plant and poured resurrection power into dying vegetation.

All things work. There is no sound of hammer or saw, there is no clatter of machinery anywhere, but in our forests in these spring days millions of tons of matter are being lifted up through the roots into trees and flowers.

Electricity works in the clouds to produce rain and purify the atmosphere. It works in the magnetic current around the earth as shown by the magnetic needle. It works in the growth of plants and in human bodies.

Sunlight works. It comes ninety million miles for the purpose. It imparts its energy to every living thing. It pours like a flood into your gardens and fields. It broods over the planted seed like a mother bird brooding over her nest and warming her eggs into life. It paints your roses and geraniums, and gilds with glory your evening clouds.

The great things also work, suns and satellites and planets. They slip, they glide along their orbits a million miles a day. They rotate with inconceivable rapidity on their axes and in their wondrous, com-

plex, interlaced and intertwined orbits and movements, they are spread through the universe everywhere.

No doubt it was because Jesus saw this marvellous vision of energy and power that He so fully appreciated the activity of His Father when He said, "My father worketh hitherto, and I work." No wonder some observers of nature incline to the view that all things are just concentrated forms of energy. No wonder Jesus said, regarding His earthly life, "We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day. The night cometh when no man can work." Each of us may well say the day of life is short. We must do our work faithfully and well.

"Time worketh, let me work too,
Time undoeth, O let me do,
As busy as Time, my task I'd ply
Till I rest the rest of eternity."

Now the difficulty which confronts us is not so much to believe that all things work. This is evident in large measure to our senses. It is difficult for us to understand how all things work together, when we see the clash and conflict of life, and the power of sin in the world. It is hard for us to see how all things work together for good, and when we think of our own pain and sorrow and struggle and disappointment, our temptations and our losses and our sins, it is not easy for us to accept the view that all things work together for our good.

II. The source of our confusion. Our confusion arises chiefly from false assumptions regarding life. Our difficulties nearly all grow out of fallacies regarding ourselves or God. Let us observe a few of those fallacies.

First, we may assume falsely that things are working for good only when they are working for our comfort and earthly happiness. This is the chief fallacy in most lives that are perplexed and baffled by their earthly circumstances.

A mediæval legend tells of a hermit and angel in human form travelling together. The angel had told the hermit the secret of his exalted rank and nature. Having been hospitably entertained in a humble home, the angel arose and strangled the infant son of the parents in the home. The hermit thought this must be a devil and not an angel. Entertained the next night, the angel stole a superb golden cup from which the host drank wine. Crossing a bridge, the angel asked a pilgrim the way to the next town, and pushed him into the river to drown. The next night the angel was sent to the pig-sty to sleep and gave the golden goblet the next morning to the rude host.

"Get thee gone," said the hermit, "thou art no angel. Thou requitest good with evil, and evil with good."

"Listen, short-sighted mortal," said the angel. "The infant had made the father covetous, and would have resulted in the loss of his soul. The owner of the goblet was fast becoming debauched by excesses and he will mend his ways. The pilgrim was about to commit mortal sin. As for the wretch who drove God's children from his door, the bauble will please him for a time, but he will burn in hell."

This, of course, is a mere legend, but in it is embedded a great truth. Many of the mysteries of life would be solved, if we could catch the ear of the angel, or rather, leaving the figure of speech, if we could know the end which God is bringing to pass for us.

We may falsely assume that trouble is merely a consumer and destroyer in our lives. But this is not the true view. Sorrow and trouble may be a reaping of what we have sown, but it may be a sowing of what we shall reap. Tribulation is a producer, not a consumer in our spiritual lives, if we have faith, if we love God. "Tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

"He that goeth forth with weeping,
Bearing precious seed in love,
Never tiring, never sleeping,
Findeth mercy from above.

"Sow thy seed, be never weary,
Let no fears thy soul annoy;
Be the prospect ne'er so dreary,
Thou shalt reap the fruits of joy."

We may falsely assume that God cannot over-rule sin and Satan and make them execute His purposes. In the old cotton gin of the South a horse was hitched to a long pole which was fixed at the other end in a heavy upright revolving beam, and by walking round and round in a circle the horse was made to turn the gin overhead and separate the lint from the seed of the cotton. The horse was all unconscious of what he did. Even so sin and Satan may work for the saints of God. Their efforts through God's overruling providence may become means for advancing our welfare.

We may falsely assume that pain and death are only

evils. Here again we need to remember how God converts these into purifying agencies if they are received in faith.

We may assume that our lives are isolated from others whereas they are interlaced at every point with the human lives about us. Much of our pain and sorrow are vicarious. We suffer because of others and with others. We cannot shut our eyes to human suffering so long as we live in this world. We cannot close our ears to the cry of distress. Great chivalrous movements are in progress in which we must take part, or else the universe is against us and not for us. I do not refer to money-making enterprises, but to great movements to enlighten and make better, movements to regenerate and redeem. These represent the Key to history. These indicate the direction of God's march. The man and woman who reads these signs of the times, and who join in this new chivalry, are the ones for whom "All things work together for good." We cannot, except at our peril, lead a selfish, isolated life.

Again, we may falsely assume a limited time platform for the development of our characters, while God is working on an eternal platform. God has planned our destinies on a scale which will admit of the play of eternal forces and eternal opportunity for it.

The thought of mankind is slowly coming to this Bible view of the world. History, and political science, and physical science, and all the other phases of human thought converge upon this great clue to the world's meaning. Consider for a moment how this great truth of a divine purpose of good towards men has made progress in human thought.

In politics men have passed from the idea of gov-

ernment for the sole benefit of the governor, to the higher idea of government for the benefit of the governed.

We have passed from the idea of the world as the centre around which the universe revolves, to the grander idea of the earth as a tiny mite in space, revolving around the sun, and the sun revolving around some other centre, and so on out into magnitudes beyond the power of human imagination to grasp or conceive.

We have passed from the idea of man as the plaything of kings and commanders, to be slaughtered or enslaved according to his whim; to the sublime conception of man as infinitely precious in God's sight; and from the idea of one nation as the chosen people and special favourites of heaven, to the glorious truth that all men are dear to His heart.

We have passed from the idea of the world of nature as a place where the pitiless and ruthless power of law and force and energy sweeps human beings to destruction, where there is no eye to pity and no arm to save; to the grander conception of the world as our Father's house in which love presides and "not a sparrow falleth without Him."

We are passing from the idea that this life is merely a place for acquiring food and clothing and houses and lands and the enjoyment of a few brief years on earth, up to the nobler view that this world is but a vestibule to an endless life.

We are passing from the false view that life here is just an opportunity to acquire fame or honour or wealth, to the grander view that life with all it yields of joy, or woe, is just our chance of learning love, that love hath been, and is, and shall be.

We are passing upward from the view that the survival of the fittest is the meaning of the world, to the conception that that meaning is the redemption of the unfit; that true greatness is in serving, not in being served; that the true aristocracy is not that of title, or learning, or official position, or wealth, but of character.

We are passing from the idea that the poor and the wretched and the destitute and suffering are just a hindrance and stumbling block to our ease and comfort, up to the nobler, grander idea that they furnish us our best opportunity of learning love and of achieving character.

Thus we are learning through the revelations of science and philosophy and sociology, and through all human experience, that the inspired words of Paul are true. We are seeing that all nature and all history and all grace, as well, are against the unloving and selfish, against those who seek their own, against the sinful. All things work together to crush and destroy the man whose attitude is against the benevolent purpose of the great onward movement of God. But all voices join in a chorus of confirmation to the other truth that the universe is for us if we love, nature is for us, grace is for us, history is for us, that "All things work together for good to them that love God."

XIV

THE REVIVAL OF MORALITY IN OUR PUBLIC LIFE, AND ITS MEANING

Deut. 16: 18–19—*"Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates . . . and they shall judge the people with just judgment."*

THE text supplies the basic principle of Jewish civilization. It supplies the corner stone of true American civilization, viz., civic and economic justice.

Two facts of far-reaching significance are manifest to any one who has carefully observed American public life during the last few years. One fact is the reassertion of great moral principles in the conduct of public affairs and the new momentum acquired by moral movements.

It is nothing less than a moral revival on a broad scale, which is full of deep meaning. The other fact referred to is the rise, along with the revival of righteousness, of a new type of leader. Once more men in public life are appealing to the higher things in their constituencies. The new leader is not less ambitious than the old, but more scrupulous. He is not less skilful and adroit, but more select in the choice of means.

Now, these men and these movements are symptoms of underlying causes. Behind them are a great set of ideals, moral principles which are coming into play. These I will next indicate.

First, then, this moral movement means a revival from the morality of private to the morality of public life. One distinction is passing out of human thought, I hope, forever, and that is that a man can claim to be moral because in his private life he is a good man, while in public life he is an unscrupulous villain. Another distinction is passing away forever, and that is that a leader in public opinion or teacher of morals can confine his deliverances to private conduct while winking at unrighteousness in public life. A great preacher of the gospel who was faithful to his duty in instructing his congregation in the moral principles of political action received a good little book from a very simple-minded devout person. On the book were written these curious words: "There are no politics in heaven; there is where your life should be; sad, sad, that it is otherwise."

"Now," said the preacher, "that was very kindly meant, but can you imagine anything more absurd? You might as well write to the chief physician in one of our hospitals and say to him, 'There are no hospitals in heaven; there is where your heart should be; sad, sad, that it is otherwise.' Or to the president of a great railroad, 'There are no railways in heaven; there is where your heart should be; sad, sad, that it is otherwise.' I should not wonder if the good Christian person who sent me this admonition sometimes gathers poor people together and gives them tea and good little books; and I might write to her and say, 'There are no tea meetings and good little

books in heaven; there is where your heart should be; sad, sad, that it should be otherwise.'"

The good lady was right in her assertions about heaven. There are no politics in heaven, it is true. There are also no crap games in heaven, and no grafters in heaven, and no saloons in heaven. There is no evil in heaven. The reason is that somebody did some hard work to suppress evil on earth.

It is, in the second place, a revival from the morality of expediency to the morality of principle. The man of expedients without moral principle asks but one question: How can I gain my object? Success at any cost is the law of his being. Success is the only God he worships. The man of moral principle asks: How can I gain my object and retain my character? One conceives of life as a shipwreck and every man grasping for what is in reach, a plank, a spar, or oar floating past. The other conceives life as a voyage in a sound ship guided by compass and stars. One floats on the eddies and currents; the other steers a prearranged course. One is impelled by a sense of danger or greed for gain, the other by the law of right. One lands wherever the tides cast him; the other keeps the prow pointing to the haven of the eternal city of God.

American life has been too much a scramble for the prizes of our physical wealth. We have gold mines and copper mines and oil fields and cane fields and timber lands and fisheries and many other forms of national wealth. Our national tree has been laden with these rich prizes, and we have been like boys devising all sorts of means to bring them down—clubs and long poles and climbing irons—anything to get the fruit down regardless of the injury to the tree, and to other people in many cases.

It is a revival from the morality of rights to the morality of duties. This is a vital distinction often ignored in our modern life. We are coming to recognize it and apply it. It is the Christian law of conduct. I recognize the morality of rights. We must often contend for rights. But there is a higher level of morals. The morality of rights is a wrestling match. The morality of duties is a friendly conference. The morality of rights develops cunning and a certain kind of endurance. The morality of duties develops generosity, nobility, manhood. The morality of duties would put an end to strikes and boycotts.

It is a revival from the morality of property to the morality of persons. Property is sacred and should be protected. Civilization aims to safeguard property. But our civilization is slowly learning that a man is more than a sheep, that human life is above material things in value. Our legislation has too long neglected the interest of persons in its overweening regard for property, with the result that human rights are often ruthlessly sacrificed. This principle now coming to the front in our civilization means that the safety of the railway employe and passengers is of greater moment than dividends for stockholders in railroads secured through neglect of that safety. It means that the physical well-being of people who drink milk is to be considered above the profits of the dairyman who insists on keeping tubercular cows or the butcher who sells diseased meat. It means that the welfare of little children whose lives are being crushed by confinement and hard work in great factories is to be considered before the gains of those who employ them.

This principle means that the welfare of our boys and the peace of our homes and our city are of far

greater importance than the profits of saloon keepers who violate the law by keeping open on Sundays.

In the next place, it is a revival from the morality of brute survival to the morality of brotherhood. A few years ago the survival of the fittest was proclaimed as the one law of human progress in the evolutionary sense. Some English writers opposed public education because thus the state pampered and coddled the weak who should be made to struggle and permitted to die and get out of the way. A brilliant German writer named Nietzsche has put this into a philosophy. His hero is the Overman. He is the survival of the survival of the fittest. Fitness means power. Fitness means cruelty. The Overman is simply a giant. He knows no pity. Modesty, gentleness, patience, forbearance, love—these are the weak and effeminate virtues which Christianity has taught the world.

Christianity comes to the follower of Nietzsche and speaks another word—a word at once as soft as the dew and as radiant as the glory of the stars; a word which has magic power to sheathe the sword of slaughter and hush the guns of war; a word capable of unfurling the white banner of peace to the ends of the earth; a word as yet but slowly adopted in the world's vocabulary, but sure to conquer its place and give its rich and beautiful hues to all human language and to irradiate all human experience. It is the magic word, *brotherhood.*

Now, beyond a question our modern life has developed a type of Overman who has won enormous power over his fellows. It is a menace to all that is best in our civilization, except when as power it feels its responsibility. We need not be surprised

that men fear the result. We are reminded of the story of Sindbad the Sailor. In one of his marvellous voyages Sindbad came to an island where there was a giant tall as a palm tree, who had only one eye in the centre of his forehead, whose ears were like the ears of an elephant, and whose mouth was as deep as that of a horse. This giant took up the sailors from the shipwrecked vessel one by one and inspected them as you might inspect so many partridges. He selected the fattest one for supper. When he became hungry again he ate another sailor. Sindbad himself escaped, because he was so lean. "Now," says the evolutionist of Nietzsche's school, "Look upon this giant and admire!" But the socialist exclaims: "Look upon this giant and beware!"

Here, then, we have the fundamental issue in modern civilization. How can we convert the sinister forces into benevolent forces? How can we instil the ideals of stewardship into men who grasp the high places of earth, in business and in politics? How can we convert the giant into the big brother?

The programme of Christianity is both religious and moral. It puts man right with God, and then it aims to put man right with his fellowmen. It seeks to impart the new heart first. Then it seeks to make the new heart a social force. Men have waited too long to recognize the tremendous ethical demands of Christianity. It is a religion of moral strenuosity of the highest type. The moral foundations of Christ's Kingdom are clearly seen in the Mosaic and in other Old Testament teachings.

Modern Christians need to catch the ancient vision once again, that grand ideal which has burned in prophet hearts through the ages. It was the entranc-

ing vision proclaimed by Jesus Himself and which absorbed His thought and energy. That kingdom was the inspiration of the Apostle to the Gentiles who lived with the vision ever in his thoughts and who died with the prophecy on his lips that it was coming, surely coming. In his rocky prison John on Patmos looked across the stormy sea around him and beheld in beautiful symbol this Kingdom coming down from heaven to earth. To his imagination and faith it took a most beautiful form: a city whose builder and maker was God. A strange city it was, not rising from deep foundations on earth upwards towards the sky, but a city descending from the sky to earth. It was a city so fair and beautiful that it took all the costly things of earth to symbolize it.

This vision of the heavenly city seems a remote thing to modern Christians. Sometimes we fail to read the intensely practical message it conveys. It is the great closing exhortation and command of Scripture to strenuous moral endeavour. It is as a trumpet call to every man in the great battle for righteousness.

The practical question for each of us is how we shall perform our part in the great battle. Each individual and each generation must answer that question. Human history is like a brilliant game of chess played by successive players. Each generation takes up the game where its predecessor left it off. The game becomes more complex and interesting at each stage. Thus the purpose of God who presides over the game in all its stages is wrought out. Our generation has had to confront the complex and difficult problems of readjustment of human relations in a thousand ways. Literally it is true that old things have passed away, all things have become new in our industrial life!

The principles of the Gospel are unchanging. The moral universals remain the same through the ages. But if they are to win acceptance among men it is necessary that Christians live for them and if need be die for them.

XV

MOB VIOLENCE AS A SYMPTOM*

Acts 19:40—*"For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give account of this concourse."*

THE love of one's city, state or country implies hatred of the evils which do them harm. Indignation against the evil corresponds exactly with the intensity of the love. As you cannot have an "up" without implying a "down," a yes without a no, so you cannot have love without hate of the opposite of the object loved. True patriotism demands condemnation of that which injures Kentucky. Christian duty compels outspokenness in pulpit, press, and by the individual.

I wish to consider the recent mob merely as an incident in connection with the general prevalence of mob rule all over the country. In Nevada there has been almost a state of civil war; in Atlanta a year ago a terrible uprising occurred and the negro suffered; in Indiana the same thing has taken place in one form or another repeatedly. The mob is becoming chronic in American life.

What is a mob? It is a headless human milliped. It is a beast with a thousand legs, having the ferocity and blindness and cruelty and greed and passion of

* Preached after an outbreak of mob violence in Kentucky.

the beast without the conscience and the reason of the man. There are several kinds of mobs. There is the hoodlum mob, where the lawless element simply assert their lawlessness, and there is the vindictive striker mob, where labour struggling for its rights forgets itself and destroys life or property, and there is the respectable citizen mob, where the so-called best elements of the community take the law in their own hands and set aside courts and juries. The last named is the worst of all forms of the mob. It marks a new stage in the development of the mob, and this is the kind of mob Kentucky has recently witnessed.

Let us consider the mob violence as a symptom:

1. Of both a lack of confidence and of over-confidence in American institutions. From lack of confidence, men say, "we have been wronged, the courts cannot be trusted to right our wrong," or "a crime has been committed, courts cannot be trusted; we will right our own wrong." It is a lack of confidence thus. But the members of these mobs would deny probably that they were lacking in confidence in American institutions. Really they have an overweening confidence in those institutions. They think that our political fabric can endure any kind of a strain, and become reckless in their violence. This is the peculiar temptation of Americans—over-confidence in their institutions. The American temptation is not the temptation of Christ in the wilderness, when Satan wanted Him to turn the stones into bread, for we have bread and to spare, whereas Christ was hungry. Nor is it the temptation of the mountain top, when Satan offered Him the kingdoms of the world, for we are filled with glory and power. Our temptation is rather that of the pinnacle of the temple, when

Satan urged Christ to cast Himself down, trusting the promise that God would give His angels charge and bear Him up in their hands, lest He dash His foot against a stone.

But we have no mortgage on Providence. The biblical promise is to those who do justly and love mercy and walk humbly before their God, not to those who love injustice and do violence and forget God. The Biblical teaching is that degenerate government is doomed. When we fall from our high estate, God's Providence smites. In the dream of the king, the image had a head of gold, a breast of silver, thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet of mingled iron and clay, and a stone came out of the mountains, fell on the image, and ground it to pieces. The iron and clay of the feet stood for the degenerate national life. The mob spirit is the clay in our American life and is our chief peril to-day.

2. In the second place, the mob is a symptom of the collapse of the moral and civic ideal in the interest of the commercial. I refer now especially to our recent Kentucky mob. Here it was not indignation against a negro who had committed an unnameable crime; it was a mob destroying property because their profits were threatened. It was an attempt to adjust commercial relations through violence. Essentially, this mob spirit means money profits against law and order; it means the tobacco business against constitutional liberty. It means an attempt to take the silver lining from the cloud of our destiny in order to put a silver lining in our pockets. It means the golden dollar against the golden rule. I do not sit in judgment on the merits of the controversy between the trust and the tobacco raisers, or on the merits of the

case in any uprising of the mob. I point out merely the significance of the mob. If we are so money mad that our civic fabric is to be sacrificed to the passion for gain, then it is the beginning of the end with us, unless restraints can be imposed and our people brought back to their senses.

3. The mob is a symptom of a reversion to an earlier stage of human society. Man has passed from barbarism, through the military period, to the pastoral when he kept his flocks, and then to the agricultural when he tilled the soil as his chief occupation, and then he passed into the industrial and democratic era. The mob is a lapse to the military basis of society. The mob is a declaration of war. It is a return to the beast kingdoms, symbolized by the leopard and the bear and the lion and the goat in the vision of the prophet Daniel, the kingdom which was to give place to the human kingdom, where the Son of Man "held a fretful world in awe" and universal law prevailed.

Are we ready to repudiate the Anglo-Saxon ideals? The glory of the Anglo-Saxon race has been first its love of liberty, second its respect for the rights of others, third its respect for the dignity of courts and legislatures and its belief in the competency of man in all the spheres of human activity. De Tocqueville says this principle of the competency of man in all spheres is the fundamental American principle. Americans believe in the competency of the individual in the home, in the church, in the state, and everywhere to regulate his own affairs. The citizen mob is the proclamation to the world of the loss of faith in this doctrine of the competency of man to regulate his own affairs.

The citizen mob is a tremendous plea for socialism.

The socialist who wishes to confiscate all the instruments of production to the public use will clap his hands with delight. The recent mob has preached a tremendous socialistic sermon. It has proclaimed that the competitive system is a failure, that there is no way to regulate the tobacco trust by the instruments of government, that peaceful adjustment of differences is no longer possible. Of course, the members of the recent citizen mob would not admit all this, but it is implicit in all they did. They are proclaiming by their conduct the exact doctrine which the socialist is preaching from the housetops.

In conclusion, a few words as to our duty. I sincerely trust that the government at Frankfort will take vigorous hold of the situation, and we believe it will do so, whatever may be the steps necessary. There are several duties, however, which are incumbent upon every citizen. One of them is outspokenness against mob violence. The tendency is too marked to condone and excuse such violence on the plea that the grievance is great. No grievance is ever great enough to justify the overthrow of law and order, for law and order is the most precious jewel in our civilization. It is our civilization. And another duty is courage; courage in the courts, courage on the part of witnesses, courage on the part of juries, and especially courage in the citizenship at large to support the administrators of the law. Bad courts, bad juries, bad officers, and bad politics, after all, are just thermometers which tell the state of things among the people. They are effects, the causes lie back of them. A third remark that needs to be made as to our duty is that we are called upon to apply our Christianity. Theories of righteousness are good. Theories of sal-

vation are good. Doctrines are necessary. The teachings of the Bible are absolutely indispensable. But so long as they remain theories, so long as they remain mere doctrines, they amount to little. There is a tremendous call to the pulpit and to the press, to the teacher and the parent, and to every man and woman who is in a position to shape and mould public sentiment, to engage in a campaign of practical effort to apply the principles of righteousness to civic life. The real cure for mob violence is the slow but sure method of leavening the minds of the people with higher ideals of life and duty. Meantime, the direct and correct method is the enforcement of the law at every point. To this inflence every citizen should lend his aid and his support.

XVI

CHRISTIANITY AS POWER

Acts 1:8—*"Ye shall receive power."*
Phil. 4:13—*"I can do all things."*

THERE is a vital distinction between men which may be described thus: One man is a voice, another man an echo. John the Baptist said of himself, I am a voice. He meant by that that God spoke directly through him; that he was not a mere echo of what others had said. This is also true of Christianity. It may be a voice or it may be an echo. Much of the current Christianity is an echo, and sometimes an echo of an echo. What we need and what we wish is the original Christianity of power. And that is the subject of my sermon—Christianity as power. I invite attention to three aspects of Christianity as power.

I. I call attention, first, to the perversions of Christianity as power. And under this head I wish to call attention:

1. To the sacramental perversion. Early Christianity was soon corrupted from the original by priestly and sacramental elements that entered into it. There was the old human longing for a human priest to come between the soul and God, and there was a longing for the magical efficacy of sacraments, and early Christianity yielded to this temptation, and the real presence of Christ ceased to be a fact in the realm of spirit, and was thought to be a fact in the

realm of matter—Christ in the bread and wine. Now, this sacramental Christianity has a certain kind of power—power to control the superstitious, power to restrain, perhaps, the lawless, the power to quench individuality; but it has not the power to free the soul and send it along its spiritual career.

2. Secondly, notice the æsthetical perversion of Christianity. This is the perversion through liturgy, ritual, and beauty of form and ceremony in worship. I do not mean that beautiful forms and ceremonies are necessarily hurtful or un-Christian. What I mean to say is that Christianity has often lost its power in the beautiful form. The ideal of Christianity is not primarily beauty, but righteousness; not æsthetics, but power. The question of ritual, then, is not fundamental in Christianity. But it is of vital importance whether you conceive your Christianity as æsthetic culture or moral energy. Ritual cannot cure sin. It is beautiful, like the Venus de Milo in the Louvre in Paris, but it is handless and armless, and as a spiritual force by itself it is as helpless as was this same Venus when Heine, the German poet, tempest-tossed and distressed in spirit, stood before it and held out his hands in entreaty and begged the Venus to help him.

3. In the third place, notice the intellectual perversion of Christianity. Jesus said in His word in the first chapter of Acts: "It is not for you to know, but ye shall receive power." The attempt to make Christianity an intellectual culture has often perverted it. This perversion is an attempt to reconcile Christianity with every new form of intellectual culture carried to the point of emptying Christianity of its distinguishing elements. Many human thinkers have

been kings in Zion—men like Plato, Aristotle, Darwin, Hegel, Ritschl—dominating the thoughts of men, and leading them captive to a humanly devised system of culture or thought. But this is a perversion of Christianity. While Christianity harmonizes with every element of truth in all systems, and while it is proper to seek these harmonies, it is always fatal to economize Christianity and trim it to make it fit these human systems.

II. I ask attention, in the second place, to the adjustments of Christianity as power. We have noted some of the perversions. I now wish to remark that no Christianity can have power which does not maintain the Biblical adjustments which are the conditions of its power.

1. The first adjustment is to its source, the Spirit of God. Christianity is a spiritual religion. It means power from without, but it means power within man's spirit through God's Spirit. Christianity means enlisted power; not a power evolved from human nature, but power given from above. Indeed, in this respect it is like all the forms of power. When a man eats bread, or drinks water, or inhales the atmosphere, he is simply forming an alliance with the physical universe, with the cosmos, and drawing its power into his life. Likewise, when he obtains spiritual power, it is from the spiritual cosmos. The divine order is laid hold of.

As a power thus coming from without, there are several important truths connected with it. It comes to us. As a person it speaks to us, communicates ideas, energy. We can grasp it. Past failures and discouragements do not count, for they only mean that we have been matching our own power against obstacles. Our own weaknesses and infirmities do not count,

because the power which we have is from without, is independent of us, and can use us for its ends. Hence, we should cultivate this power assiduously, patiently, continuously.

2. A second adjustment of Christianity as power is to its instrument, truth. Christianity owes much of its power to the fact that it employs truth to accomplish its results. The fulness of power came in early Christianity when the fulness of truth came. Pentecost followed closely upon the ascension of Christ. When the facts of redemption were completed, the interpreter of the facts came. Jesus Christ is like the sun. The Holy Spirit is like the sun-glass which concentrates and intensifies the rays which fall from Him upon the human heart. The danger of mysticism is that it will break away from truth, and the danger of intellectual study of Christianity is that it will lack in the mystic element. It is the union of spiritual power with truth which gives the largest results.

3. In the third place, note the adjustment of Christianity to its agent, personality. The power of the Gospel is a personal power. When Jean Val Jean was arrested for stealing the candlesticks from the Bishop and carried back to the home of the Bishop, in the great novel of Hugo, you will recall that the Bishop told the officers that he had given the candlesticks to the man; whereupon Jean Val Jean went out, having been released by the officers, into a great struggle with God, the result of which was his conversion. In thinking over his struggle, he recalled that it was not, after all, a struggle with God so much directly, as a struggle with God through the Bishop. The face of the Bishop haunted him in all his inner struggle. It was God in the kindness of the Bishop

that won him. So God reaches men through other men. The meaning of grace is that it takes the form of personal life, personal character, personal consecration. All the great descriptions of grace in the New Testament find their expression thus in personal action. Our personalities are the dynamos of divine power in the world.

4. The fourth adjustment of Christianity as power is to its end, world conquest. Christianity is by its nature expansive. Any force or principle which is inherently expansive in its nature must have play and freedom, or else it fails of its end and loses power. Christianity is such a principle. It cannot be confined without injury to itself. It demands growth, progress, expansion; and any form of Christianity which does not contemplate such growth is destined to wane in power. New Testament teaching on this subject exhibits clearly its nature in this regard. The promise of power in the New Testament is coupled with world conquest. "All power it given unto me," said Jesus, and then commanded, "Go ye into all the world." Witnessing in power is coupled with a world field—Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth. The peril of the power of Christianity was that it might be contracted into a Jewish sect. A house-top vision was needed to illuminate the mind of Peter on this subject. The enemies of the power of Christianity were the Judaizers. The apostle of power was the great Apostle to the Gentiles, whose gospel rang out with a clear note of universal invitation to mankind.

III. In the third place, I invite attention to the appropriation of Christianity as power. To appropriate Christianity as power is to have faith in Jesus

Christ. It is to appropriate Him. Christianity is the religion of a person; a person is the centre. Mohammedanism is the religion of a book. A personal object of devotion such as Jesus Christ is unknown to Mohammedanism. All the great efforts to attain power in Christian history have been efforts to relate the life of the believer to Christ, the effort to maintain union with Him. The effort of John Wesley, and of Finney, and of the Keswick people, with their seven points in the life of consecration—all these are efforts toward one and the same thing, finding the way to Christ and the way to maintain union with Him.

After all, our problem is a problem in spiritual mechanics. It is the problem of overcoming resistance at one point by power at another point. It is maintaining the spiritual life at such a high level that the carnal and the worldly influences cannot overcome us. We must change the proportions of the spiritual and the carnal in our lives. Some one has said that a water-bottle might float like a feather in Uranus, and that a man might jump ten feet in the air at the equator in Neptune, all because the proportions of natural forces are changed, modified.

Let us resolve together that we will maintain this contact with Christ; that we will trust, not a book, not a method, not a creed, but Christ. We will not let the clatter of the machinery of organization, the pursuit of earthly gain, or the chill of unbelief dampen our faith, but that we will maintain steadfastly the spiritual life to the end. And we shall find that contact with Him means power—power for personal service, power for missionary endeavour, power in our churches, and boards and conventions, power in social and business life, power everywhere.

XVII

DEDICATION SERMON

Haggai 2:9. *"In this place will I give peace."*

THE background presents a picturesque situation. A remnant of the captive nation has returned from Babylon. Before them at Jerusalem lay the ruins of the first Temple built by Solomon, the glories of which long since had perished under the vandal hands of the conquerors. The returned exiles first devote themselves to efforts to improve their material conditions and are engrossed in the task, forgetful of the house of God. Then appears among them the tall and impressive and aged form of the prophet Haggai, who calls the people to the task of rebuilding the Temple. His appeal is a striking one, which is found in its chief points in Chapter 1, verses 4 to 11.

These verses, taken in connection with my text, give us the function of the church in human life. For the house of worship stands for the people and the worship and the spiritual life which is carried on within it. I observe the two-fold function of the church in human society: First, the temporal, and second, the spiritual.

I. The Temporal Function of the Church.

What does the church signify for man's temporal life? It stands with its quiet and unostentatious ministries in the spiritual life, but what has it to do with worldly and temporal affairs? Can there be any rela-

tion between the church and the vital forces in the soil which give life and fruitfulness to the planted grain? This old prophet says "Ye have sown much and bring in little," because of the neglect of the house of God. Can the church affect economic questions and have anything to do with poverty or riches? The prophet says: "Ye eat but have not enough; ye drink but ye are not filled with drink," because ye neglect the house of God. Does the church affect the stability of savings banks in any way? Haggai says, "he that earneth wages that he may save it putteth it in a bag with holes," because they lived in ceiled houses when God's house lay waste. Is there any connection between the church and the physical universe? Has the church any alliance with the sea and the sun and the clouds? Has it an orbit of its own in the vast system of forces, like that of a planet, which affects all the parts of the system? Listen again to the words of the old prophet: "Therefore, i. e. because ye neglect the house of God, for your sakes the heaven is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. And I called for a drought upon the land and upon the mountains and upon the grain, and upon the new wine and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands." (ch. 1, vss. 10–11.)

The hand that made the universe made the church and set it in the midst of the vast system of things. It is the keystone in the arch of human life which binds all the parts together and prevents their utter collapse. One of the most pathetic things in the reading of history is the fate of great empires and civilizations, and in them all we look in vain for any force or agency

or influence which did or could do the work of the Christian church. They were massive arches reared by human wisdom, but without the keystone which holds them together. The Babylonian civilization and that of Greece and Rome were unfinished arches which fell under the blow of the tempests of time, because there was no church to serve as keystone and make them stable.

It is no wonder then that modern nations of the West which have known the power of the church regard it as possessing the highest economic as well as spiritual value. No wonder the police force of London reported that vice and crime decrease in the slums of London in proportion as the forces of Christianity triumph. No wonder the English officers in Burmah reported that Christian towns and villages were like moral and spiritual oases in the desert of the surrounding heathenism in the early days of missionary effort. No wonder that the blue books of the nations appraise each foreign missionary to a heathen country as being worth fifty thousand dollars per year to commerce, for a missionary is the leader of a procession. Behind him, in lengthening file, walk the carpenter and the blacksmith, the architect, the farmer, the banker, the merchant, the doctor and school teacher, the lawyer, the statesman, the scholar. The missionary waves the wand and new civilizations spring into being, as if by magic, around the little churches which he founds. No wonder Mr. Bryce, in his "American Commonwealth," comments with praise upon the significant fact that in our westward development all the new commonwealths accepted as an axiom the principle of the non-taxation of churches and church property, on the ground that the church makes a contribution of the

highest possible value to the common life and gives far more than an adequate return for all it receives in exemption.

And yet, it spite of the manifold temporal blessings which the church bestows upon the community, there are a large number of people who enjoy these blessings, and who yet pass it by, who never enter its doors, or give one cent to its support, or speak one word in its praise. They are unconscious, perhaps, whence these blessings come. The church rises, with its spiritual influences, like a mighty, invisible tree, with massive and wide-spreading branches on which the fruit ripens and falls every day in the year. Thousands there are who, like children beneath the mighty tree, gather the fruit and eat it with never a thought of the tree itself or the cost in time, and money, and labour, and prayer. and spiritual struggle, to those who keep the tree alive and make it fruitful.

And yet it is true that while on the one hand there are those who take the temporal benefits which the Church of Christ bestows without any appreciation or recognition of the source, yet on the other, those who support the church and give their lives for her usually do it without any direct reference to the temporal benefits at all. Their chief appreciation is on other grounds. In another mood and for different ends they sing

> "I love thy church, O God,
> Her walls before thee stand,
> Dear as the apple of thine eye
> And graven on thy hands."

II. And this leads me to my second point, which is the spiritual function of the church.

"In this place will I give peace, saith the Lord Jehovah of hosts." In these words we have the secret of human devotion to the church and the secret spring of its mighty influence over human life. Man's deepest need is union and fellowship with God. One has said "the purpose of God in creation did not appear until the dust stood erect in the form of a man." But the meaning of man did not appear until his likeness to God appeared in man and the tragedy of history is the hunger of sinful man for the God whom he lost. The deepest need of man is reconciliation with God, reconciliation in all its forms. We need to be reconciled with God in the sense of cheerful and obedient acceptance of our lot in life, our poverty or sorrow or limitations and hindrances; in the sweet assurance that all is well in any condition so long as we have Him. We need reconciliation with God in the sense of cheerful surrender of what is beyond our reach in our desire or ambition. We need reconciliation to God in the sense of a firm confidence that our lifework is according to His will, in order that we may be inspired to do our best in all our undertakings. Above all, and deepest of all, we need fellowship with God in the forgiveness of our sins, which leads to peace with all men and a heart without bitterness towards any upon earth.

Now the church is the institutional form of God's answer to man's craving, the Gospel of Christ being the central and only message the church brings. There are two statements I make at this point which I believe can be defended against all who would contest them. The first is that no matter what road of human experience a man travels, ultimately he will find that his supreme need is peace with God. The other statement is that no matter what be the form of that need or the

experience out of which it grows, the church contains the blessing to supply it. Plato the philosopher, the ablest man intellectually of ancient times, travelled the road of thought and what was his conclusion? "We must wait until some God, or God-inspired man shall come and lift the veil from our eyes?" He needed intellectual peace with God, and the Christ who is the centre of the life of the church is the exact counterpart of his thought. Job travelled the road of sorrow and loss and disaster. Wave on wave of ruin smote his life and left him poor and friendless and helpless, and in the great deep of his suffering his longing was for one who could lay one hand on God and one on himself. He needed peace with God. The Hindoo devotee whom the missionary saw prostrating himself in great distress, and who told the missionary of his wanderings from shrine to shrine and from one sacred place to another, of having surrendered all his wealth in the vain effort to find inward peace, and who promptly accepted Christ the Mediator when presented to him, and found what he had so long sought, simply needed peace with God.

Now we may observe how the church brings its spiritual benefits to men.

Let me say here that I am not advocating the idea of salvation through the church. Salvation is by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ anywhere on earth, in the inner chamber, or on the mountain's top, in the thick of the battle of life, or the quiet of the cloister. But I do mean that the church is the only organization on earth which stands for the highest spiritual interests. There are political organizations and various benevolent organizations. These may be good in their places and for their ends, but none can

take the place of the church. The utmost that science can do forever comes short of the spiritual redemption man needs. In his new "Locksley Hall," written sixty years after the first one, Tennyson laments the failure of science to minister to man's deepest and highest needs. He says, indicating modern tendencies:

"Pluck the mighty from their seat, but set no meek ones in their place
Pillory wisdom in your markets, pelt your offal in her face.

"Tumble nature heels o'er head, and yelling with the yelling street
Set the feet above the brain, and swear the brain is in the feet.

"Bring the old dark ages back without the faith, without the hope
Break the State, the Church, the Throne, and roll their ruins down the slope."

Now I do not say there is no religion without the church, but I do say that religion never becomes effective as a force in human society without the church. Electricity may be diffused through space and even run along a wire, but you cannot get a message without the instrument in the office which localizes it. The Church is the instrument which localizes the religious power. Divine beauty lies hidden in the moisture and the sunlight, but the glories of the rainbow do not appear until the sunlight falls on the floating moisture at the proper angle. The church is the moisture adjusted by the Divine hand to the beams of His own

grace wherein unto angels and principalities and powers is made known the manifold wisdom of God.

I note a few of the ways in which the church fulfils its spiritual mission and ministers peace to men.

(1) The first is by the vision it affords of divine things. In the West there is high up on the mountain side a narrow rift in the wall of solid rock, a mere crack or slit, through which, after a vigorous climb, one may look out into the Yosemite Valley upon a vision like that of Paradise. The church is such a rift in the blank wall of life where we come on the Sabbath day to gaze upon the infinite. We carry the vision with us back to our drudgery of daily toil and through the week we are inspired by it.

(2) The church fulfils her ministry to our spirits by the fellowships which she creates.

It is not strange that the aged and infirm, that the invalid and shut-in so longs for the worship of the house of God. For in it and through it have come the sweetest and most sacred fellowships outside our own homes, and the church casts a halo back even over the home. This fellowship of the saints in the household of God is associated with our deepest experiences. How many of us have found the words of the text to be true? The man who has wandered from the path of duty and the world grows cold and empty and a deep heart-hunger arises in him, and he returns to the fellowship of the church, and as he leaves the house of God his heart echoes the words, "In this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts." The man who is harrassed and burdened, who knows not what is duty or how he shall act in some great emergency, finds his way into the courts of the Lord and the peace of God which passeth all understanding, steals into

his heart and he goes forth in lyric ecstasy of soul, singing to himself the words, "In this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts." The heart that has lately stood over an open grave and has known the heart-break of death and darkness in the home, to whom "the touch of the vanished hand and the sound of a voice that is still" are as poignant memories and incurable wounds, comes once again into the circle of Christian fellowship and hears the voice of sympathy, and is once more still to listen to the words from the sacred desk about the resurrection and the life and the tender pity of the Lord, and is swept aloft by sacred song as in a divine tempest of compassion, and as if by some divine magic the healing comes and the heart is made tranquil with the peace which the world cannot give and cannot take away, and it too lisps in humility and joy the words of the text, "In this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts."

(3) The church fulfils its mission by supplying power as well as vision and fellowship.

The place of any object in the scale of being and its value are largely determined by the forces and influences required to sustain it. You measure thus the gulf between the organic and the inorganic. The pebbles require the action of a few of the mighty forces of the universe to sustain it, while the tiniest flower calls for the action of the mighty ocean to give it moisture, of the power of gravitation to give it shape and form, and the sunlight must needs travel ninety million miles to paint its petals. Higher still is man in the scale of being. He requires all that the flower does and in addition the energy of the spiritual universe. This is the meaning of Christ and the Gospel, "We all with unveiled faces beholding as in a mirror

the glory of the Lord are transfigured into the same image from glory unto glory." Man can unfold into his highest possibilities and fulfil his destiny only as divine forces play through his soul. When Jesus says "ye are of more value than many sparrows," He is not saying that sparrows are worthless, but only that relatively man is unspeakably more valuable. When He asks, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul?" He does not mean to disparage the world, but only to show how much greater relatively is man than the world. When Paul speaks of our groaning in this tabernacle of the body and in our earthly environment, he does not mean that we are weaklings and helpless puppets amid the play of colossal forces of the cosmos which are greater than we. He means rather that we feel within ourselves the play of forces vaster than anything around us, energies which shall enable us to break asunder the physical husk, like a divine chrysalis, when we shall spread our wings in a glory which shall dim the firmament. Now the church is the sphere in which and through which these divine forces play. In her atmosphere and fellowship, through her ministry and ordinances and worship, men find themselves acted upon by God Himself.

Now it requires sympathy and appreciation and an attitude of faith and susceptibility to obtain any of these things from the church. There are two sides to her life, the outer and the inner. From without she presents not an ideal spectacle. Only those who get the inside view can know the meaning of what I say. Susceptibility, responsiveness, a spirit alive to spiritual realities, and docile under divine influences—these alone come into the true meaning of Christ and of His church. One, a child, stands before an upright ob-

ject in Italy yonder and sees in it merely a hard piece of stone which in some strange way has assumed human shape. Another, a man, sees in it the wondrous vision of Michelangelo, who transmuted it from being crude marble into his masterpiece, Moses. The difference is one of susceptibility. One hears a succession of noises made by a group of men sawing on something they hold in their hands, with horse-hair strung between the ends of a stick, and wonders why they waste their energy for naught. Another hears in those sounds the harmonies of a mighty symphony lifting the soul to the stars. The difference is one of susceptibility. One sees in man a physical organism made up of so much oxygen and carbon and phosphorus which has no meaning beyond that of the beast that perishes. Another sees in him a spirit delicately strung through the physical organism, like the strings of a lyre to be played upon by the breath of almighty God and destined to endure when the "world is old and the stars grow cold and the books of the judgment day unfold."

One sees in the church a mere outward organization with no special significance for the world beyond any other organization. Another sees in it the action of divine forces of fellowship, of brotherhood, of love, sees in it the prophecy of the end of war and the reign of justice upon earth, sees in it the ideal of a coming Kingdom of God when His will shall be done on earth as in heaven, and if he enters her fellowship he will learn that the kingdom of God is the kingdom of love.

XVIII

THE REDEMPTIVE MISSION OF JESUS CHRIST

Luke, 19: 10—*"The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost."*

DR. LYMAN ABBOTT is reported as having said a few years ago that he would be glad if the word salvation could be blotted out of the list of great words in our Christian speech. Perhaps he was not inveighing so much against the use as against the abuse of the word. For the removal of that great word would be the removal of the Keystone from the arch. It would be to ring the tree of life with the keen edge of the axe, and to leave it to wither and die. If we take this word and keep it properly related to Jesus Christ and His purpose, it can bring no evil, but only good. It does not mean a mere fiat righteousness, or artificial deliverance; but lies at the very heart of the moral energy of a redemptive Gospel.

I. Christ came to reveal salvation to us.

If one were to ask what is the most distinguishing mark of the Christian religion, the answer would have to be this: it reveals God's initiative in salvation. While other religions represent man as seeking after God, this represents God as seeking man. In those religions man, sin-blinded and perverted in nature, seeks out all kinds of gods to worship; in this, God, in the person of His Son, breaks the long silence of the ages and speaks; bursts like a sunrise upon the astonished gaze

of man, reveals himself as a God of holy love with a boundless compassion for men.

Observe now the power of the contrast between God and humanity in this revealing impulse embodied in the career of Jesus. Man was engaged in a seeking and saving enterprise, but how unspeakably below that of God. Individual man, seeking and saving wealth, or reputation or power. The Jews even with their favoured position as the depositaries of God's earlier revelation, were seeking and saving the letter of the law, while its spirit was dead. The philosophers were seeking and saving their various rival theories of the universe. The nations were seeking and saving political power and influence. Human hearts lay crushed and bleeding everywhere. Human life, despised and rejected, the weak and wayward, and blind and helpless sat in the region and shadow of death and gazed pitifully out into the bleakness of the moral and spiritual night, without God and without hope, when suddenly, like the clear note of a silver trumpet, sweeter than that ever sounded by archangel and resounding through the corridors of the soul of the despised and outcast publican Zaccheus, and thrilling it as no human souls were ever thrilled before, came the words, "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost."

The contrast with man's mental achievements was equally striking. The best efforts of human reason in that age of the world had attained this view. There is a God somewhere, we know not where. But he is outside the machinery of this world, which moves on its ruthless way. Man is but a fly or a frog or other insignificant creature who may be caught in the machinery and crushed.

Even to-day some of the most brilliant writers grope their way out to the limits of the universe as they see it, and declare that there is no love or pity in it. It is, they declare, a scene of ruthless conflict; a struggle for life; a fierce conflict for supremacy. No quarter is given, none received. Nature everywhere is "red in tooth and claw with ravin'." Cruelty, cruelty, cruelty is written all over the face of nature. As for man, says one of these writers, the whole race is doomed. Nature bears us on in a chain of inviolable law of cause and effect. We are on an express train one of whose rails is natural law, and the other matter. This train is drawn by an engine whose motive power is kinetic or some other form of natural energy. We are rushing along this track at an incredibly rapid rate, through a moonless and starless night towards a bottomless abyss into which we will surely plunge at the end.

Another writer shrinking in horror from such a picture, clutches wildly at some straw of hope, and says we must believe that somewhere there is a power, though what it is we can only surmise. We are like lost travellers. A blinding snowstorm is all about us, and we shiver in the piercing blast. We must go forward yet we know not where to go. If we go to the right we may fall into a yawning chasm from which there is no deliverance. If to the left who knows but that we shall wander further from safety and rest? Yet if we stand still, we are doomed. We can only plunge forward and trust that somehow we will arrive at a warm fireside and food and shelter.

How pitiable the intellectual failure of man as thus disclosed! How wondrous and joyous the revelation of God in Christ as a contrast!

Even religiously man's effort seems as unavailing. Buddhism is at once the most perfect and the most beautiful and the saddest of all the human attempts to find God. Buddha was a winsome character, who felt the pressure of the misery and pain, the awful burden of human existence. His one remedy for all was to extinguish desire. Quench desire, all desire. Millions of years, in many forms of existence and spheres of being may be required. But this is the only road to peace. Suffering, expiation for past wrong-doing will hound a man through the wastes of existence, will lash him with a whip of scorpions until at length he will expire like a candle, or be reabsorbed in the infinite like a bottle of water broken in the ocean. Sad indeed is the wail of Buddha. His religion, which is to-day the religion of millions upon millions in India, is one of the emptiest ever offered to the human spirit, so far as real comfort is concerned. It knows the sting of the human conscience, but no balm to relieve it. It knows darkness and limitation of human ignorance, but it has found no rift in the enveloping clouds. It knows human weakness, but has caught not even a glimpse of a little finger, much less of an arm mighty to save. Strangest of all, and beyond all other ethnic religions, it has caught a glimpse of the far away moral perfection shining like a dim whiteness beyond the stars, but never yet has it dreamed of a way to attain it.

To the puzzled intellect and to the broken heart of man there comes a voice. To the weary pessimist, and to the desperate wayfarer in the storm, afraid of the wilderness and perishing with the cold, and most of all to the moral struggler, the conscience-stricken, who with hopeless hand clings to a lurid spectral faith in

the extinction of life and desire—to all these comes the voice: It says the iron chain of law is not the deepest fact. Personality is above law, controls law. For the Son of Man *came,* broke into the on-going world from above. It says the apparent cruelty of nature is not the final fact. Love is the heart of the universe. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save. It says extinction of desire is not man's destiny, but the purification and transformation of desire and a blissful immortality with God. It speaks across the gulf and says to all sorrowing and downcast and earnest souls: "O heart of man, a heart beats here; in the eternal bosom are pity and grace, for the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost."

For observe how that love revealed in the coming of the Son of Man is elaborated and illumined for us in the three parables of the lost coin, the lost sheep and the lost son. I think those interpreters are correct who see progress and unity in these parables. Each parable, as is true of all parables indeed, is like an artist's picture in which the light is concentrated on the central figure, while the remainder of the group lies in shadow. Each parable teaches a single great truth.

The lost coin, which the woman with lighted candle sought until she found, teaches that man has value in God's sight; that God feels himself impoverished if man is lost. He who holdeth the wealth of the world in His hands has unceasing pain and sorrow in His heart over lost men. This is a coin which He fain would recover for himself. But the lost coin cannot fully illustrate man's lost condition, because it is a senseless thing. It has no power of choice, no intelligence, no moral nature.

Another parable, therefore, develops the idea for

us. The lost sheep did not fall from its owner's hands and roll away under the bed or cupboard. It was tempted away. It was heedless and thoughtless and wandered off from the fold. Thus does the sinner wander. Often he was almost as thoughtless and heedless in it as the sheep. Perhaps in childhood, but dimly perceiving the wrongness of the conduct, he fell into temptation until away from safety in the wilderness of sin. But after the lost sheep goes the seeking shepherd into the depths of the wilderness.

But the last parable shows the cause of man's lost condition. The prodigal deliberately chose to wander away. Besides he must deliberately choose to return. The sheep would never choose to come back to the fold. But the prodigal, melted by the memory of the father's heart and home, lashed by the sense of sin and shame, resolves, and acts upon his resolves, and the parable shows the boundless love of the father who waits and yearns for the wanderer.

This, then, is the drama of redemption set forth in parables: God's impoverishment in the lost coin; God's patient and persevering quest for the lost sheep; God's boundless welcome to the wilful wanderer in the lost son. This is the revelation of salvation brought to us by the Son of Man.

II. In the next place, Christ came to effect salvation for us.

Now man's lost condition made necessary a great transaction, and included in my text must be the idea not merely of a revealed, but also of an achieved salvation. Now I will not take up the doctrine of sin in any of its various speculative conceptions. There is the literary and æsthetic conception which thinks of it as a disagreeable hindrance to the smooth on-going

of the social machinery; and the scientific conception that regards it as merely a stage in man's upward progress; and there is the theological conception which connects it with heredity. But experience in the light of the New Testament revelation is the best practical guide, and that is that man is hopelessly lost without Christ. It is man's lost condition which made the whole enterprise of redemption necessary.

This fact helps us understand the apparent excess of divine attention bestowed upon man who is so insignificant in himself and inhabits so tiny a speck of a planet in the boundless universe of God. It is due, not to the value of this as compared with other worlds, but to its condition, lost. That is the key to it all. Admit if you will, that this world is the least of worlds, that it is just a little Bethlehem of the Universe, an out-of-the-way hamlet, while the great metropolis lies yonder in the Milky Way; or to employ the figure of the parable, that man is the smallest coin in all the divine treasury, a mere copper piece; or admitting, if you insist upon it, that man is the least of God's intelligent beings, that in other worlds there are beings by the side of whom man is but a pigmy in stature,—yet when this is all said, there remains one vastly important thing unsaid, and that is that man the pigmy was a lost pigmy, and that although he was the least of the coins in the divine treasury, yet he was a lost coin, and that lost coin bore the image and superscription of God Himself, and that though this earth was but a little Bethlehem, a hamlet on the boundless shores of space, yet it was a hamlet which sin had invaded, a spot where sorrow sat, and pain and misery and despair brooded and where the cry of the weary and the wandering went ever up to the great Father-heart of God. That is the great fact

which exalted this world into an interest and importance for God beyond any other. Over against this we place the fact of God's native impulse to bless, His inherent and inborn longing to communicate of His own ineffable joy, to give "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness," and we no longer wonder that the great redemptive enterprise filled His being with that overflowing and exuberant purpose and love that resulted in the incarnation of His Son.

Then too, if men object that the Divine One should empty Himself to become man, that it implies imperfection in God, that He should take human form, and especially that it implies imperfection that He should suffer, (and I believe that He did suffer)—then the reply comes clear and distinct that, leaving out the theoretical and speculative suggestions involved here, the truth lies in the other direction, viz.: in this, if incarnation and suffering were necessary to man's redemption, if man was lost and incarnation and atonement were necessary, and God were incapable of these, then He was incapable of taking care of His own. It would imply that sin had created a situation with which He could not cope. It would imply that man had fallen into a gulf of woe too deep for the divine arm to reach him, and this would be the greatest of imperfections. It would imply a conflict between the impulse of love which wished to save, and the impulse of power which was not equal to the task. So that the capacity to empty himself and become incarnate, the capacity to suffer and atone, is the mark of infinite moral perfection in God. So that when we read, "that being in the form of God, He counted it not a thing to be grasped to be on an equality with God, but emptied

Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross," we are not to shrink in incredulity from something which seems to us unworthy of the Divine One, but rather should we bow in adoration as we see unrolled before us, as upon the scroll of revelation, in this descent, humiliation and ascent of Christ, the unfolding of the eternal riches, the glory and power of the divine nature itself, the throwing open of the doors of the immeasurable treasure-house of the divine love.

After all, what was the meaning of that self-emptying in order to save the lost? Was it that He actually put off divinity? No. That limitation must be viewed in the light of the great fact that man was made in God's image, that human personality and divine personality are alike, one is as the sun and the other as the reflection of the sun in the dew-drop. He could not take the form of a worm or a lion and save worms or lions, because they are not made in His own image, but He could become man and not cease to be God, just as man can become divine and not cease to be man.

Then, too, His limitation was limitation for a special purpose, redemption. His aim was to concentrate His divine energies, not to lay them off, divest Himself of them. The perfection of human thought and knowledge is when a man concentrates perfectly, ceases mental activity in diverse directions in order to accomplish a result in one direction. The great merchant with a dozen factories or department stores has the knowledge of them all at his fingers' ends—every detail of every department of a vast and complicated business. But one day his eight-year-old and only

son is run over by a passing vehicle. The merchant drops all else and hastens to the bedside, and a great anguish and a great love and yearning seizes him as he watches the tides of blood unchecked, flowing from the wounds of his child, and a great purpose masters him. Factories and stores are now forgotten, money making no longer interests him. Away back in the recesses of his being that knowledge and that energy retire, and he is possessed by sympathy and yearning and love for the little lad whom he may lose. He empties himself of all else. He lays aside the career of the merchant. The form of a captain of industry, of a prince of commerce, he lays aside—and all his skill and wealth and time and thought are poured out around the little life to save it. This is his self-emptying. All this knowledge and commercial skill will surge back when the little life is safe and the physician says he will recover. Until then, that other life was as if it was not to him.

Such was the self-emptying of Jesus. The incarnation was the self-emptying of the divine pity, of redemptive power and grace. He sat by the bedside, His hand on the fevered pulse of humanity, forgetful of the heavenly glory, with all that former splendour somewhere back in the depths of His being, until the patient was better.

Now what did Christ effect for us in His atoning death? His seeking and saving work cannot be considered fully without regard to this question.

One remarkable fact about this matter strikes the reader of the Gospels, and that is the reserve of Jesus on the *cost* of atonement. He will die, He will give His life a ransom for many, so much He expressly declares. But He says little of the darkness and

agony, the loneliness and desolation. Why this reticence, this reserve, this silence? I think it was a wondrous mark of His grace and delicacy. He will not obtrude upon the lost, what it cost Him to redeem them. He will leave them, under the guidance of His Spirit, to discover this for themselves.

Every one feels the fitness of this way of bearing, of enduring, and not talking about it. When the German prince visited America, New York City gave him a banquet. The daily papers talked much of its cost. Why, they said, we gave him a most magnificent banquet. It cost a hundred thousand dollars. A quiet old lady somewhere was reported as saying, "That is very indelicate. It is not for us to boast of what our banquet cost us to entertain our guest. Let him tell of that." In his story, "The Virginian," Owen Wister makes his splendid Virginian cowboy criticize the poet Browning. The young lady had read to him the poem describing the heroic act of a young soldier of Napoleon in battle in which he is mortally wounded. Returning with a message to the general and delivering it, Napoleon exclaims, "You're wounded." "Nay, sire, not wounded but killed," the poet represents the soldier as replying. The view of the cowboy was that that was a false note. "If that fellow had the grit to do that deed, he would have had the grit to have died without talking about it."

At any rate, as one has said, "Heroes are not their own heralds." Christ was to have other apostles and witnesses. Hence we are not surprised that there is little in the Gospels on the subject. Accordingly we find in the epistles that the cost is much dwelt upon by Paul and John and Peter. What, then, did these men find, the men of inspired faith in the death of

Christ for our redemption? A very brief reply is all we can give.

For one thing they saw in Christ's death more than a moral spectacle to move men to repentance. It was that, but a deep necessity lay behind it. Some deny this necessity and assert that the cross is simply a moral exhibition, an endurance of suffering as a proof of love, set forth as a means of breaking the human heart and leading men to return to God. But this "impressionist" view of the atonement is not a complete account of it. It was a deeper thing than that. Imagine, if you can, a man saying to his wayward children, "Now, my children, I am going to make an exhibition of my love to you by burning my hand to a crisp in the fire." Or a shepherd saying, "Now I will make a journey through the wilderness and the night, through briars and quagmires, not to rescue a lost sheep, but to convince my sheep that I love them." You cannot imagine a sane shepherd or father so acting. Neither can we imagine Christ or God so acting.

The cross stands for more than that. The cross embodies two impulses or qualities in God, one the self-imparting, the other the self-preserving impulse. It is God's nature to be holy. He must defend Himself against unholy rebellion. This is the self-preserving impulse. It is God's nature to give, to bless, to save. This is the self-imparting impulse. Christ's death united the two. God does not love us because Christ died for us. Christ died for us because God loves us. Christ died to make man holy; but first of all He died because God is holy. One has well said, "God is love and law is the way He loves us; God is law and love is the way He rules us."

We usually say love is the sinner's hope, and holi-

ness is the sinner's fear. This is true. But the reverse is also true. Love is the sinner's fear because love exacts, demands, will not be content with anything but ideal perfection in the loved one. The loved one must reflect the image of the divine lover like a mirror without a flaw. Hence love seeks out every defect, labours with infinite patience to perfect every detail of character. God's holiness, again, is the sinner's hope. For God's holiness cannot endure the presence of sin which brings misery and eternal ruin to the sinner.

This, then, was the great transaction of Calvary, the union in a perfect act of suffering and obedience, of the two supreme ethical demands of God's nature and man's lost estate. This explains the Gethsemane cup which He raised to His lips and looking into it twice, shrank in horror from its bitterness. This explains the cry of desolation on the cross itself:

"Yea once Immanuel's orphaned cry
The Universe hath shaken,
It went up single, echoless,
My God, I am forsaken!

"It went up from the holy's lips
Amid His lost creation,
That of the lost no son should use
Those words of desolation."

III. Christ came, we observe next, to *be* salvation in us. No one understands all that is meant by the seeking and saving of Christ who does not take the full Biblical view. Salvation is a past thing, the life and death of Jesus. Salvation is a future thing, resur-

rection and glorification; but salvation is also a present thing, the victorious and living Christ within us.

A new grasp of this truth is the most urgent need of Christians to-day. The reality, the vitality, the energy of a present and a living Christ in the soul. A power from without and above coming into our lives and reversing them. But we cannot suppress or conquer the power of sin within us or without us. Within us we feel its sting in conscience, and conscience masters us and will not be silenced. By my will I can control my physical nature, command my bodily actions. By my will I can control, in a measure, my feelings, my emotional nature; by my will I can control my mental nature; I can compel attention upon a given subject. But by my will I cannot control my moral nature. Conscience will not yield to my will, I need a master.

Nor can I control sin without me. As one has said, sin is not merely infirmity, nor a mistake, nor a step upwards, it is a power in reversed action. As a sailor knows the resistance of the adverse wind and tide, as the tunnel builder knows the resistance of the granite in the heart of the mountain; as the mountain climber knows the resistance of gravitation, so I know and feel the power of sin resisting me and overcoming me. This is what I find sin to be as a law of nature. I need an inward and an outward deliverer.

Yet there are men who tell me I am to be delivered, not by a personal Redeemer energizing my will, but by law. When I throw a handful of rusty pens, and a handful of tiny bits of blotting paper out of my window, the wind and gravitation determine the place where both will rest. The pens will fall straight down; the paper will be carried away to its place.

Law, fixed and immutable, determines all. I am held in its clutches as in a vise! So I am told.

There is a law of grace as well as a law of nature. There is a law of the spirit as well as of the flesh. There is a law of personal action exerted in a realm of personal beings, as well as a law of physical action exerted in a closed system of physical forces. This personal action is also grace. It is Christ within you, the wisdom of God and the power of God. It is Christ within you the hope of glory.

Drummond compares the living Christ to the daily manna of the Israelites in their wilderness wanderings, and the dying Christ to the brazen serpent. Now one great mistake of men has been in putting the serpent for the manna and the manna for the serpent. The two theologies have done this. The new puts the manna in the place of the serpent, and the old the serpent over the manna. The brazen serpent cured the bite of the real serpent, but could not sustain the life of the healed one. The cross redeemed from the curse of the law, but the living, energizing Christ in the soul alone gives triumph over all our foes. We are not to look at the cross alone then for the exhibition of grace; but to the whole career of the transformed man's life.

IV. Now I come to my last point, which is, that Christ not only came to reveal salvation *to* us, and to effect salvation *for* us, and to be salvation *in* us. He came also to achieve salvation *through* us.

There is one infallible proof that that salvation has been revealed to, effected for and in us, and that is that it now operates through us. The one evidence above all others that we are Christ's is the reproduction in us of His redemptive passion. A modern

writer represents a character in a certain story as having a vision of the creation by himself of the world. Power is given to his will to call a world into being. His fingers are endowed with skill to mould it into symmetry and beauty. It is peopled by his creative power with beings fair and glorious to look upon, and spotless it rolls away from his hands into a splendid career. Thus he is permitted to know the creator's love of his own handiwork. But then the spoiler comes. The blight and shadow fall upon that world and it wanders in sin and woe; and now he knows the creator's indignation against the spoiler. His sympathy with His suffering creatures, and His irresistible redemptive impulse.

Now Christ's redemption fails of its object unless it reproduces in us His own and God's redemptive passion. This is the highest thing in God, the most glorious. It comes only through experience of the redemption that is in Christ. Some things we learn concerning God in other ways. His pity for our foolish and childish ways, His great patience with us we learn from our own human fatherhood. Mr. Patmore's little poem brings this out, as Dr. Forsyth has pointed out. "He had punished his little son and put him to bed, his mother, who was patient, being dead." Sore himself, he went to see the child, and found him asleep with all the queer and trivial contents of a little boy's pocket set out beside him to comfort him.

"So when that night I prayed
To God, I wept, and said:
Ah! when at last we lie with tranced breath,
Not vexing Thee in death,

And Thou rememberest of what toys
We made our joys,
How weakly understood
Thy great commanded good—
Then, Fatherly not less
Than I whom Thou hast moulded from its clay
Thou'lt leave Thy wrath and say,
I will be sorry for their childishness."

Thus does earthly experience of fatherhood teach us some things. But when Christ's redemption becomes ours by experience, we enter into a greater deep of fatherhood and sonship, and that is not how fatherhood is pitiful and kind toward foolish and ignorant children merely, but how divine fatherhood and sonship unite in a mighty purpose full of passion and sacrifice to redeem—a passion which does not spend itself until the sins of the world have in some strange, mysterious way become our own burden and the salvation of men our aim.

But at once when that saving love has become ours and we understand, it masters us and we share in God's creative, redemptive, paternal passion towards the lost world. With Him we feel impoverished when the coin is lost, and we leave the ninety and nine in the fold to go after the wanderer, and join in the glad celebration when the prodigal returns. To us money becomes glorified because it becomes a means of expressing and of exerting this redemptive passion. Talent and time and the whole earthly career are transfigured because they are opportunities to carry on the sublime enterprise. With Paul we exclaim, not as in the translation, "This one thing I do," but rather in his laconic and intense brevity—"but one thing"—

meaning there is but one thing to do, to think, to plan, to execute. One thing fills the horizon of my life and experience. This is his meaning.

I suppose this is why the message of redemption is confined to the human subjects of it—that nothing except an experience of it can create an energy adequate to accomplish redemption in others, and because our own redemption is completed in our redemptive service.

It is often said, you know, that angels are not permitted to carry on this redemptive enterprise. But if you study the book of Revelation carefully you discover that they have much to do with it. Yet their service is limited and imperfect and must ever be finished and made complete by the redeemed themselves. In the eighth chapter, for example, angels offer incense before the altar out of a golden censer. But the incense is without effect unless mingled with the prayers of the saints. In chapters fifteen and sixteen angels have the seven plagues and pour out the seven bowls of wrath, and in one place (chapter 10) an angel, arrayed in a cloud with a rainbow about his head, descends to earth and stands with one foot on sea and one on land, holding a book in his hand. "Now," you say, "an angel will surely preach." But no. He hands the book to John the prophet, the redeemed sinner who eats it, experiences it, and then prophesies to many nations.

But there is one place where even more closely still an angel seems to come to this great task (chapter 14:6). An angel is seen flying in mid-heaven, of whom it is declared that he has the eternal good tidings to proclaim unto them that dwell upon the earth. And now at last with bated breath and rapt attention

you listen for an angelic sermon. But again we are doomed to disappointment. For not one word of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus do we hear but this: "Fear God and give him glory: for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven and earth and the sea and the fountains of waters."

Thus we never hear angelic announcement of the great secret of the Son of Man, His redemptive love, and I suppose the reason is that:

> "None of the angels ever knew
> How deep were the waters crossed,
> Nor how dark was the night
> The Lord passed through
> Ere He found the sheep that was lost."

We the redeemed sinners do not and cannot know fully all the meaning of his sacrifice. And yet we do know in part with a genuine knowledge the meaning of redemption. And it is because we know that He has committed to us the great task of witnessing to His redeeming love.

XIX

HE CAME TO HIMSELF

Luke 15: 17—*"He came to himself."*

WHEN the prodigal said, "Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me," and left home to enjoy his inheritance, he followed "his bent." He yielded to an impulse within which urged him to indulge himself. He followed his bent. But by and by he spent all and came into dire want and distress. He was willing to eat the food of swine. Then he said, "I will arise and go to my father." Again he followed his bent in a deeper, truer sense. It was then he came to himself. Men who have studied the human mind scientifically have given us a phrase like that I have used. They speak not of a man's "bent" in the ordinary popular sense. They speak rather of the *curve* of his character or of individuality. When you look at a human life in its general outline or tendency, you discover its curve. Is the man predominantly ambitious? Or is he magnanimous? Is he covetous and grasping? The curve is the main line or tendency. Now when you can get down to the bottom of a human life and find out its deepest tendency, you find the real man.

Oliver Wendell Holmes has said that when John and James are engaged in a conversation, there are really six people present, John as John thinks of himself, John as James thinks of him, and John as he

really is. In like manner, there are three Jameses. No man's deeper nature comes to the light until he finds himself in a religious way.

Now the text says the prodigal after long wandering "came to himself." The real meaning of the statement is that he discovered himself to be what he had not before suspected. From this we may learn a great lesson applicable to us all.

Observe first, then, that for a man to come to himself is self-discovery, is to find the deepest law of his being. What was it the prodigal found in finding himself? He found this: that the make of his own soul agreed with the make of the universe. The universe may be likened to a series of concentric rainbows. The outside rainbow, vast and comprehensive, embracing all the others, is God. Marvellously rich in power, wisdom, love, righteousness, and truth, the wondrous colours in the rainbow of His nature shine out to eyes which can see them. Inside this rainbow of the divine nature itself is the smaller rainbow of His creation, the physical universe. The same qualities and attributes are seen, more dimly, but nevertheless the same, in creation as in God. The invisible things of God, since the foundation of the world are clearly seen in the world about, even His eternal power and Godhead. So Paul declares. Now inside the rainbow of creation is yet a smaller bow reproducing again the same colours, man himself. Man's true nature reproduces the seven colours in God's nature. Love in man answers to love in God; will answers to will; righteousness answers to righteousness; power answers to power. So in all the manifoldness of God's man's nature; they are not the same in degree, but they are the same in kind.

Now when the prodigal came to himself, he discovered that his own nature was made on the same principle that the universe is made upon. He discovered that the curve of his nature was the same as the curve of God's nature and that in choosing a self-indulgent, wayward, wasteful life he was trying to reverse the curve of his nature. He found that he was made to be a Son and not a prodigal, and that as a consequence to try to live a prodigal while made to be a son was misery and ruin. A life of sin and a life of sonship are contradictory ideas. The great and wondrous truth about God is that He is Father. This is the richest and most brilliant colour in the rainbow of His nature. The great and wondrous truth about the prodigal was that he was made to be a son. The filial in him was the brilliant colour answering to the paternal in God. This was his discovery when he came to himself. He said, "I will arise and go to my father."

All prodigals violate this great truth, that their souls are constituted as God is constituted. They always come to the swine and husks. Until they reassert their own natures, they find loss and sorrow. An incident will illustrate the point. A church member, a beautiful singer and earnest Christian, apparently, fell into a great sin. He tried to take his own life in his despair. As his pastor, I urged repentance and confession. He indignantly refused and said hard things about his brethren. He said there was a devil in him and he was afraid he could never cast him out. But some one knew there was also an angel there. I appealed to his sense of sonship to God and portrayed as best I could the nobility of confession and repentance. He seemed to be moved by my words, and on

the next Sabbath night he was in his place in the choir. He sang a solo in the solemn hush of that evening hour, and the entire congregation recognized the song as his confession and return. It was a song so simple, so pointed, and sung with such a pathos and power that none could mistake its meaning. It was the familiar song:

"The mistakes of my life have been many,
The sins of my heart have been more.
But when the dear Saviour shall bid me come in
I will enter the open door."

Here again was one letting the filial in his own nature answer to the paternal in God. It was a prodigal recognizing the curve and colours in the rainbow of his being as the same as those in God's, and proclaiming the great truth that no soul can ignore its own make; no soul can reverse the curve of its being and remain happy.

In his poem, Paracelsus, Robert Browning teaches this great truth. You remember how Paracelsus sets out in life to discover the great secret and win the great prize. He is swayed by ambition for power. He compares himself, about to take the plunge into life, to a pearl-diver. There are two supreme moments in the experience of the pearl-diver; one, when a pauper he stands ready to plunge into the sea; the other, when a prince he rises with his pearl. At the end of the poem he comes forth a disappointed man, and he gives the reason for it. It was the love of power. He says:

"I failed: I gazed on power till I grew blind.
Power; I could not take my eyes from that:

That only I thought should be preserved, increased
At any risk, displayed, struck out at once—
The sign and note and character of man."

But power is not the only colour in the rainbow of the universe. Power does not satisfy unless joined with love. Again he says:

"I learned my own deep error; love's undoing
Taught me the worth of love in man's estate,
And what proportion love should hold with power
In his right constitution; love preceding
Power, and with much power, always much more love,
And earnest for new power to set love free."

Ah, there the rainbow colours flash out. Power to set love free, that is the use of power. This is the use of wealth, and health and place and influence, education and genius. Power to set love free. This the prodigal found who sought only power. This the prodigal found who sought only self-indulgence. All God's power is power used to set love free and we, as Sons, should copy Him. The Gospel is declared to be power. But it is power to set love free; power is used to manifest love. This is the curve of the universe and the curve of man's nature.

A boy attended a beautiful exhibition representing some great historical events in the form of tableux. He fell asleep before the performance began and did not wake until it was over. Next morning he spoke with enthusiasm of the show. Inquiry developed the fact that he had reference to the pictures on the drop curtain which he saw before he went to sleep and after he was awakened. He slept before the curtain

was rolled up and until after it was rolled down. He had never laid eyes on the real performance. All who waste their substance in riotous living have that experience. They think they see the meaning of life. They never once behold life's real meaning. They destroy themselves by an illusion.

There is the intellectual prodigal who wanders from God in his theory of the universe. He goes away from the Father in thought. What a strange mistake is made by the materialist! He is an intellectual prodigal. If he would look within at his own personality, he would find the real explanation of the world. Instead, he chooses the clod. He says there is nothing greater nor better than a clod, except perhaps all the clods of the world rolled in one. Nature is simply a big clod. There is a little life here and there, it is true, a blossom here, a bird there, a man yonder. But the blossom will fade and the bird lose its song, and man lose his intelligence. All will cease except the clod part of our nature. If you make of nature a series of concentric rainbows and the smaller ones reproduce the curve and seven colours of the outside one, says the materialist, then you must get your outer rainbow from the clod, with its matter, force and motion. Man is a breathing clod; the planet on which we live is a rotating clod, and the sun is a flaming clod, and all the vast assemblage of worlds in space are simply clods in motion.

Now this method of explaining the world is very uncalled for and illogical. Why select the clod, the lowest and poorest thing we know anything about, and reconstruct nature out of that? Why not take the human spirit, with its longing and conviction of immortality, with its intelligence and will and moral

nature, its personality as the starting point. This would lead directly to the Father. In choosing the clod instead of man as the key to the world, he adopts a strange course. You offer him a weed and flower and he chooses the weed. You offer him a pebble and a ruby and he selects the pebble. You offer him brass and gold and he chooses brass. You hold out to him a cinder and a lamp and he says, "I prefer the cinder." You point him to a pathway leading upward and shining with a light supernal as it passes beyond the stars to the Father's house and at the same time a blind alley leading nowhere and he chooses the blind alley.

No wonder materialism is waning. Prof. Haeckel is almost the sole survivor of that philosophy among prominent men. And he is like the

> "Boy that stood on the burning deck
> Whence all but he had fled,
> The flames that lit the battle wreck
> Shone round him o'er the dead."

Materialism is the attempt to feed the soul on dirt. It empties the world of all hope. It is the mother of despair. With it as our guide, we feel as the Ancient Mariner felt:

> "Alone, alone, all, all alone,
> Alone on a wide, wide sea,
> And never a Saint took pity on
> My soul in agony.
>
> "The many men so beautiful,
> And they all dead did lie,
> And a thousand, thousand, slimy things
> Lived on and so did I.

"I looked to heaven and tried to pray,
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came and made
My heart as dry as dust."

Now, we do not read nature aright when we stop with the clod. Behind the curtain of matter shines the form of God our Father. The prophet whom God called into the mountain heard first a wind, and then felt an earthquake, and after the earthquake a fire. But God was in none of these. After the fire came a still small voice, which was God's voice. (I Kings 19: 11.) It was something human answering to the human in us. It was God the Father answering to the voice of the son within us. It was the rainbow of the divine nature flashing out in response to the colours in our human nature. And, oh, how that voice sounds everywhere in the world since Christ revealed to us the Father.

But, after all, the chief cause which interferes with men coming to themselves is a moral one. Sin has given a bias to our natures.

What is sin? Many definitions have been given. Sin is privation or negation, one says. Sin is an infirmity due to a fleshly nature, says another. Sin is a step in man's development, says another, and so on. But one of the best definitions of sin is that it is a power in reversed action. It is as when you stick a splinter in your flesh and all the nerve power and vitality in the blood, instead of working for your health, now works for disease and inflammation and pain. The vital power of your body working against you. It is nature in reverse action. Or we may say, sin is a failure to come to one's self, and to discover

the agreement between the make of the soul and the make of the universe, that the colours of the inner rainbow of man's nature and the colours of the inner rainbow of God's nature are the same.

"Judas went and hanged himself" is the brief record of the end of the betrayer of Christ. It was the most logical act a man could perform on the Judas theory of life, that he could ignore the make of his soul. Suicide is supreme folly, yet it is the logical result of supreme folly which preceded. Sin hurls a man full tilt, not like Don Quixote, against a windmill, but against the stars in their courses. No man can safely fight the stars. The suicide ignores the make of the universe. He takes the wrong path to come to himself and fails. He is crushed by a power he cannot resist.

Buddhism as a religion is simply a gradual method of committing soul suicide. It has its distinct theory of the make of the soul, how it is built. All misery comes from desire, says Buddhism, from love of wife, child, father, mother, of wealth, fame, power, from the love of life. The eyes are burning with desire, the mouth is burning, the nose is burning, the ears are burning, the whole body and soul are burning with unsatisfied desire. These desires never can be satisfied, says Buddha. Therefore, extirpate desire; root up love. Destroy hunger and aspiration. Quench the flame of desire. Nirvana, oblivion, self destruction is man's only hope.

Now the prodigal up to the moment he came to himself had just this experience, but instead of going on the Buddhist way to suicide, he took Christ's way to the Father and found himself. He did not extinguish, but changed the direction of desire. He discovered

the secret of the world. He found the Father awaiting him with ring and robe and feast. He came to himself, to his own, to the riches of the Son of an eternal Father.

Man's power to respond to God is his most distinguishing mark. Certain sea animals, like the porpoise, rise to the surface now and then and it may be gaze upward when the stars are shining brightly, at the firmament. But astronomers they can never become, because they have no imagination or mathematical faculty. Man, on the contrary, coming up out of the sea of his self-indulgent life, beholds the glories of God's spiritual heaven and of his Fatherhood and has power given him to respond to the revelation. His soul leaps up to the infinite because it is made in the image of the infinite.

Before closing, I must indicate briefly that Jesus Christ is the great teacher, leader, and Saviour, enabling men to come to themselves. To follow him is to find the Father. "No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten son hath declared him." "He that hath seen me hath seen the father." "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me." The bow of Christ's yoke is easy to wear; it is a seven-coloured rainbow of hope made of the qualities and attributes of God Himself, God's love, God's power, God's wisdom, God's truth. Those colours appear in the beatitudes, Christ's recipe for blessedness. Blessed are they that mourn; merciful; hunger and thirst for righteousness; peacemakers, etc.

"But," says someone, "will not the universe right itself of itself and get rid of all sin, and thus in righting itself, will it not right us too? Will not the warp and twist in the universe come out through the lapse

of time?" Perhaps so in physical nature. But the warp and twist of our wills will not come out unless we by God's grace untwist them. Man's nature was made free. Freedom is one of the colours of the rainbow answering to God's freedom. This freedom warns us that we may permanently choose to remain out of adjustment to God and the universe. Our light may go out. Sin may send us down to eternal despair. Astronomy teaches that, while some of the heavenly bodies are flaming suns, others are cinders whose light went out ages ago. A human life may become a flaming sun or it may become a cinder. Its own free choice will determine. Man must repent. He must arise and return to God if he would know the meaning of life and destiny.

XX

MANHOOD AND CHILDHOOD RELIGIONS

Hebrews 4: 16—*"Let us draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace."*

THIS text contains one of the most distinctive teachings of Christianity and touches the heart of religion. It asserts man's direct relationship to God. I invite attention to three phases of this truth.

I. The severity of the ordeal which it imposes upon man. That ordeal is the direct vision of God. Notice here the contrast with the accepted and current modes of dealing with God. When the words were spoken the religions of the day practised the indirect method of approaching God.

The heathen nations could not conceive a religion without a human priest, a holy man who could stand between the flaming splendour of the divine being and the trembling soul. Here is no recognition of any priest save Jesus—the great, invisible, ascended and glorified high priest, who was thus lifted up to the level of the divine, and invested with something of the awfulness of Jehovah Himself. Even among the Jews the shekinah glory of Jehovah was concealed behind the veil of the temple above the mercy seat, whither no one might intrude save the high priest once

a year; yet the awful responsibility of the high priest is here put upon the humblest believer, who is told to enter into the most holy place.

The Jew cherished such a reverence for the divine name that he substituted another word for the name of God lest he be guilty of blasphemy in uttering that name, and yet we are here urged, not to take the name of God upon lips indeed, but to enter into the flaming splendours of the divine presence itself.

Occasionally in the prophets we find an ideal description of God as an everlasting fire, as a consuming flame. "Who shall dwell in the everlasting burnings; who shall abide in the eternal fire?" Isaiah asks, meaning thereby, not hell, but the divine nature itself. Then the answer comes from him: It is only the ideal holy man who can endure that fire; "He that lifteth not up his hands to vanity, that walketh uprightly," a man of the highest moral worth. Yet in this New Testament revelation we find the writer assuming that every believer may do this thing. Each of us is told to walk in the burning fiery furnace of the divine presence.

It was a most natural gravitation of human nature back to priesthood and sacraments in the early centuries of Christianity. Men felt that human hands polluted by sin and frail as the brittle clay of which they were made could not endure to go directly into the divine presence and receive from the hands of the eternal Himself the gift of grace. Hence they turned the simple ordinances of Christianity into sacraments, and said grace comes through the waters of baptism and the bread and wine of the supper. The ladder of spiritual worship rose to dizzy heights and its rounds were rounds of fire, and the timid spirit

of man shrank back, baffled and terrified at the task of climbing it.

II. Notice in the second place the perfection of the medium of access to God. We may understand this shrinking of the human soul from God; it is the sense of sin and guilt that causes it. But the New Testament has forever removed that barrier. The preceding verses tell of our high priest who is touched with a feeling of our infirmities, who intercedes for us.

There is a passage in the Epistle of John which shows the writer's insight into the human heart. "If we walk in the light as he is in the light we have fellowship one with another," John says. Yes, we say, but who shall walk in that light? Think of it, the ineffable light and glory of the divine nature. In those white rays every sin shines out, even the least. The least shortcoming or evil becomes a burden of guilt grievous to be borne. But, anticipating this shrinking of the soul, John adds, "And the blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanseth us from all sin." Ah, that is the secret of our approach. While we walk in the ineffable light, the blood of Christ whitens us to correspond to it. So that, in spite of man's sense of unworthiness, he is invited to aproach God, to come boldly to the throne of grace.

III. Observe in the third place, then, not only the severity of the ordeal, and the efficacy of the medium of approach, but also the glory of the privilege and duty. It is the glory of Christianity that it calls for direct approach of man to God. This religion of the direct approach to God assumes the possibility of fellowship between man and God, that we are made in God's image. Any religion which shall do the best things for man must have in it the elements of the

infinite, because there is an infinite element in us. It must have in it also the element of the finite, because we live amid finite things. We must bring the infinite down into the finite and lift the finite up into the infinite. The true religion grants the greatest boon and imposes the highest responsibility —freedom. It sets the greatest task and constrains to the greatest calling—world conquest. It points to the loftiest heights and supplies the loftiest inspiration —God.

There are three tests to any religion. First, it must not keep a man a minor; second, it must not repress any element of his nature; third, it must not limit the development of his unfolding nature in any direction. In other words, it must first make him a man; second, it must give symmetry to his manhood; third, it must allow full play for all his powers.

You may divide all religions into two kinds: those which keep us minors and those which make us men—manhood religions and childhood religions.

The one great manhood religion has all the great elements in it.

You may have a religion without mystery, but that would imply that you have no power of insight into the meaning of things. Only a childhood astronomy is content with the view that the stars are "lightning bugs."

You may have a religion without danger, but that implies that you have no courage. It assumes that you are a coward. All men may not be brave, but nobody would like to be painted grovelling at his enemy's feet.

You may have a religion without the necessity for endurance, but that implies that your muscles are

flabby, or that you are an invalid, and that there is no element of the heroic in us.

You may have a religion of sight, which can penetrate no deeper than external forms, but that implies that you have no capacity for inner vision, no power to gaze upon the unseen; and all of us revolt at the imputation that when a man and a horse stand side by side on a landscape the man can see no deeper into its meaning than the horse.

When the Scripture says: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him," it clearly means that God's way of making Himself known to us is spiritual. The senses do not reveal God to us. The eyesight may assist the spirit, indeed, but there must be more than eyesight. I may gaze upon the soft radiance and all the wonder of the stars on a clear summer night, and thus I may be lifted into spiritual fellowship with God, so that my spirit beholds what the physical eye never saw. But I should remember that astronomers have been known whose calling required them to live amid the glories of that stellar world and who were yet never believers in God.

So also the grandest music may do it, but then again it may not. "Ear hath not heard it." Wondrous as is the passion of the great singer, the rolling notes of the organ, and the thrilling power of the orchestra, this thing of which I speak is higher—"Ear hath not heard it." "Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter."

Or you may divide religions into voice religions and echo religions. There are echo religions and hearsay religions in plenty in the world, but what men want

and need is a voice religion—a living voice speaking to the soul. One comes to you with a creed and says, "This is what God said to men once, and you are to believe it because God said it. A human pen wrote it, but it is true." I say, Yes, this all may be true, and I might subscribe to what you say God said, but after all, this would be but an echo of God's voice. The objection to a creed is not that it is untrue necessarily, but that it is an echo. I want to hear the voice itself. Or the priest may bring you the sacrament and say, "This bread and wine which you see is the body and blood of Christ, and it will give you life." Again I say, This is an echo. The Scriptures declare that eye hath not seen the vision of God. When I come to the Scriptures, I recognize the voice. The others only echo; this sets my heart-strings all athrill. When I come to God in prayer, I find the same result: the throne of grace becomes real, and its power enters my life.

The chief objection to the Mohammedan rule of so many prayers a day as the complete discharge of religious duty is that it belittles man. It goes on the view that our spirits can be easily satisfied, that there are no abysses of desire and yearning, no hunger and thirst for the eternal, no great deeps in our nature which rise beyond the earthly. A religion of forms and ceremonies and observances and nothing else can never prepare a man for the great crises of life. Mohammedanism fails to see man's lofty contempt for the husks and his passionate yearning for reality. It understands not man's eternal dissatisfaction in religion with the trivial and superficial.

There are great temptations which come upon us when every temporal thing fails us. Every one of us

has his wilderness experience, when the tempter is there trying to lead him astray, attacking us at our weakest point and when helpers are far away, and urging us with great plausibility to use our powers for low ends, tempting us to transfer stones into bread to satisfy our hunger. In such an hour every one of us knows that it is eternal truth that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. It is in such an hour that we want, above all things, the privilege of direct approach to the eternal.

There are moments—yea, days and weeks and sometimes years of suffering and sorrow when our losses or our pains stun us and paralyze us. At such times men may reason with us, but the voice of reason grates on the spirit like a clanging discord and but deepens our gloom. The voice of the human comforter, even, loses its power, and priestly words sound like a mockery. In such an hour our supreme need is contact with the eternal. The power which made the universe is the only power which can sustain, and the wisdom which holds all human affairs in the hollow of its hand is the only wisdom which can then be trusted. The throne of grace is then our last resort. We listen and yearn for the clear notes of the voice of God saying, "I love thee, I love thee; pass under the rod."

There is yet another kind of experience which shows us this need. George Eliot remarks that she is sorry for the man or woman whose life has in it no lofty heights from which one may have a sense of falling, no pinnacles of experience and insight, of joy and peace, to which we may look back for inspiration.

There come times in our lives when we see life

as a whole and grasp its meaning; moments when we realize how sinful sin really is, how descipable selfishness really is, how perishable earthly values, how vain are human ambitions, and how empty is human pride. At such times we see the winsomeness of purity and the beauty of holiness, the irresistible fascination and power of love and service. At such times the heights of moral attainment tower in snowy grandeur above us, losing themselves in the white splendours of God's throne. And yet, although so high and steep, they seem infinitely to be desired. Here again we need, above all things, the sense of God's presence. We need to feel the pulsing reality of His love and power in our hearts. With that energy in us, there comes to us a strange sense of power and assurance of attainment in spite of our frailties and sins. At such times there is no feeling of self-righteousness, no pluming of ourselves on our moral merit. Indeed, there is a sense of ill-desert and unworthiness. But in spite of this, the spirit of the strong climber enters us, the glow of conquest comes over us and faith seizes the victory by anticipation. All of this is born of the sense of an infinite pressure upon our life from above and below. There is a power, irresistible but gracious, which moves and sways us and buoys us up. We are as crested wavelets rolling inward toward the shore under the impulse of the ocean's resistless tide. We are as men buoyed in an infinite sea of atmosphere, and glorified as we float in a boundless flood of sunlight.

I have spoken of the supreme moments and the great sorrows which reveal to us the reality and give direct contact with God. But, after all, these but make clear what is true every day. Believe me, the

hardest thing we have to do is to perform our daily tasks in the spirit of the Master, to keep our spirit sweet amid the rivalries and competitions of the world, to keep our patience steadfast as the nagging and irritating circumstances of life sting us and as the long-drawn battle seems to go against us; to keep our faith clear when clouds gather and to keep love's fires glowing and warm when envy, ingratitude and hate pour cold water on the flame, to keep hope forever springing in our breast—Ah, me, this is our task. This is the great task, and we need the play of eternal forces upon our lives to enable us to perform them.

I have spoken of those types of Christianity which shut men off from God and put priests and sacraments between the soul and its Maker, and I have said they assume that we are to remain spiritually children always. But what of the man who himself ignores the throne of grace and the reality of the divine in human life? Such a life is strangely contradictory. Without the element of prayer and faith a human life assumes that all the grand and significant elements in life are absent. It assumes that there are no mysteries to perplex, that human reason is equal to all its problems, and even philosophy laughs at such a view as this. It assumes that there are no great dangers to be avoided, or at least that no help is needed in the midst of the blind and bewildering play of the ponderous machinery of life, and that human hands can control all those forces. It assumes that there are no great temptations which man may not overcome in his own strength, that there are no sorrows or losses that require anything more than ordinary human foresight and skill and endurance, that there are no heights which men may not climb without help from above. Such a life

takes for granted the incredible view that a man can find his way safely across a wide-stretching quagmire, which he never crossed before, by picking his way at midnight without a lantern; that he can climb the dangerous alpine heights of temptation, with beetling crags and yawning chasms, without a guide, and that he can cross the storm-tossed sea of life in a frail craft of his own making, and defy wind and wave and tide. Ah, me! who can measure the audacity and the temerity of the life which has no throne of grace in it, no union and fellowship with God.

I am glad it does not say, Let us come to the throne of gold, for that would mean only that God is an unchangeable God, omnipotent it might be and a dwelling place of wondrous values, the dwelling place of omnipotence and unchangeableness, and yet these very qualities might shut him off from helping men.

I am glad it does not say, Let us come to the throne of light, for that light might be so brilliant that it would dazzle and blind me. I am glad it says, Let us come boldly to a throne of grace, that we may find mercy and obtain help for a time of need. That means everything we can imagine that is fair and sweet in God. It makes of Him the beautiful and tender, and forbearing and forgiving and compassionate God. It means that His exaltation above us does not hinder His bending down over us in love. It means that His infinite wisdom and power do not keep him sitting in cold isolation on the circle of the heavens, but permits him also to dwell in the meek and lowly heart.

XXI

THE TESTIMONY OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

John 9: 25—*"One thing I know, that whereas I was blind now I see."*

THESE words record the conversion of a man who had an experience of Christ's power. It had taken so deep a hold upon him that nothing could shake him from his conviction.

It is not my purpose to develop this text in a direct way, but rather to use it as an introduction to the general subject of Christian experience. My purpose is to show how Christian experience gives us testimony to the power of the gospel, which cannot be overcome.

Human experience is the one datum of all philosophy, and all science. The experience of the individual and of the race is the grist which is poured into all the scientific and philosophic mills. Hence, Christian experience as a distinct form of human experience ought to receive more attention than it has ever received before.

Prof. Bowne has emphasized the fact that whatever your philosophy, your experience is the same. You may call things by any names you will and it will not affect facts or experience. Christian Science says that all is mind, that a cobblestone, for example, is simply an idea and not a real piece of matter. We will suppose that some one hurls it and it strikes your

head and sends you off for relief. Then you have an experience in the realm of the ideal. You have an ideal stone striking an ideal head and raising an ideal bump, and producing an ideal dizziness and pain, and requiring the application of an ideal liniment, which produces an ideal cure and affords you an ideal satisfaction and peace of mind. But all this does not in the slightest degree alter the experience itself. And if you are going to rear a philosophic system on the principle derived from sudden contact of cobble-stones with human craniums, you will be compelled to take this concrete human experience to begin with. Denying that a stone is matter does not in the slightest degree change its effect upon your physical organism when it strikes you.

Science and philosophy are beginning to recognize the evidential value of Christian experience, though they are very slow about it and very reluctant about it, even yet, apparently because it is not as obvious to the senses as the facts of the physical world. The world has laughed long at Brother John Jasper, who contended that the "sun do move" around the earth because he saw it on one side of his house in the morning and on the other side at night. But we know there is a system and set of motions in the back-ground more comprehensive and wonderful than the rising and setting sun alone can explain. Now, to refuse to accept the testimony of Christian experience because it lies in a realm behind sense-experience is to adopt the John Jasper attitude towards truth. Science and philosophy have both been guilty of this to a greater or less extent. They have been pursuing the Ptolemaic system of truth with Brother Jasper instead of the Copernican with modern astronomy.

Nobody now doubts the existence of radium, and yet, as one says, it has been "bombarding" the Universe æons and under the very nose of science, and yet it was only discovered yesterday and already threatens to revolutionize science. Religious experience is the radium of the spiritual universe, which needs only discovery to revolutionize any man's thought as to life and destiny.

Now Christian experience, the experience of regeneration and conversion, of moral transformation through Christian agencies, has evidential value in several directions.

I. It is the supplemental link to complete philosophy. Philosophy is man reaching up towards God. Christian experience is God reaching down to man. Philosophy seems always on the point of discovering the secret of the universe, but it never succeeds it doing it. We thought a while ago that idealism had come to the Kingdom to save us from materialistic science, and it did good service. But idealism has become so abstract and impersonal that it cannot be distinguished from Naturalism. Oh, yes, these two philosophies are still debating and disputing, but their differences are chiefly imaginary. The dispute reminds one of the reply of the unlearned American who had travelled abroad. He was saying he had visited the Matterhorn and the Jungfrau, and Lake Geneva and Lake Leman. "But," a friend interposed, "Lake Geneva and Lake Leman are synonymous." "O, I know that, but Lake Geneva is a great deal *more synonymous* than Lake Leman," he replied. Idealism in its abstract form is perhaps just a little more "synonymous" than Naturalism, that is all.

Now why is it that philosophy seems to expend so

much labour for naught? To me it is clear that the reason why it seems to labour so long without satisfactory results is that it refuses to consider all human experience, including the religious. It splits experience up into little bits and hunts among the bits for some single abstract principle, which will explain all the rest. It is very much as if one were going to attempt to explain the ocean and all its contents, its variety and marvellous abundance of life and, instead of searching its depths, should take a single fish and scale off from the fish a single scale and, on that scale as a foundation, build up his theory of the ocean and its contents. How accurate do you suppose his account would be? And yet, this is analogous to what philosophers have done. Spinoza scaled off from the world of experience and being the idea of substance and built a pantheistic system on that scale. Hegel scaled off the conception of reason, or the idea, and reared a vast idealistic system on that. Schopenhauer scaled off the conception of will and reared his pessimistic system of philosophy on that. Haeckel has scaled off the conception of matter and builds his materialistic system on that. Another takes motion or energy or force, and so on, I had almost said *ad infinitum*.

The result of this process is that the philosophers get clear away from human life and experience. They fix their gaze on the photograph of the photograph of a photograph, a dim and faraway image of reality, and become absorbed in excessive star-gazing, metaphysical cliff-climbing and transcendental soap bubble blowing. They are like the Indian juggler who hung his ladder on thin air without its touching the ground below, sprang upon it, climbed out of sight, pulled

the ladder after him, and disappeared in the clouds.

All this ought not to discredit philosophy, but teach it a lesson. Men fail to find the secrets of the world until God and God's dealings with men are considered. Dr. Ashmore tells us of some men on a raft floating down the Mississippi River who stopped for supper one night, and then floated on, but returned after awhile to the same place, or a similar one. They did this several times until they discovered that they were caught in an eddy of vast dimensions and were being swept in a circle repeatedly back again to the starting point. So has philosophy moved in a circle with way-stations along the route, but never able to escape from the circular movement of human thought. There is one way for philosophy to escape from its situation and find the current on the bosom of the river of thought, which will carry it on to its destination. That current is religious experience, wherein man's upward soaring thought is met by God's descending revelation and love. When this current of thought is once reached, a new day will dawn for philosophy and ere long the philosopher will see the gleam on the gates of pearl and the sparkle of the jasper walls of the city of God, whither they would find the way.

Christian experience takes all the abstractions of philosophy and recombines them and gives us the conception of the Fatherhood of God. The one substance of Monism comes back as the one person behind the world. The one idea of Hegel comes back as the thought and plan of eternal love. The one energy of those who glorify force and change comes back as the beneficent will of the Holy and loving Father. The plan and progress of nature and the moral ongoing

of the world comes back as the infinite and eternal design of the Holy and Loving. Thus, when in our hearts we can say, and know what we mean when we say it, the word "Abba," Father, we hold in our hands the clue to all the philosophies, which remain in a state of unstable equilibrium until we find this key. All philosophy is thus summed up, as in the words of Dr. Fairbairn: "God is the Father, everlasting in His love. Love was the end for which He made the world, for which He made every human soul. His glory is to diffuse happiness, to fill up the silent places of the universe with voices that speak out of glad hearts. Because He made man for love He cannot bear man to be lost. Rather than see the loss, He will suffer sacrifice. In the place we call hell love as really is as in the place we call heaven, though in the one place it is the complacency of pleasure in the holy and the happy which seems like the brightness of everlasting sunshine or the glad music of waves that break in perennial laughter, but in the other it is the compassion or pity for the bad and the miserable which seems like a face shaded with everlasting regret, or the muffled weeping of a sorrow too deep to be heard. That grand thought of a God who is eternal Father, all the more regal and sovereign that He is absolutely Father, can never fail to touch the heart of the man who understands it, be he savage or sage." And we may add, cannot fail to become the generalization large enough to include all the data of life and history of science and philosophy.

II. In the second place Christian experience sheds light on all the unique claims of Christianity.

Prof. James, you know, and other scientific observers concede that religious experience is a witness

to the supernatural; only he refuses to admit that Christ is the author of it, and does not concede the other unique Christian claims. The attempt is to find a common denominator, so to speak, between Christianity and other religions and show that all are essentially alike and that the distinctive Christian ideas are overbeliefs. But these men have not thought through the problem of Christian experience, in particular they are shy of facing the actual claim of Christ and His relation to it all.

Christ's place in Christian experience is the supreme matter. All other Christian claims go with this.

Now the spiritually regenerated and morally transformed man proves the deity of Christ, proves His presence in religious experience for the following reasons:

First of all, because no man has moral resources to transform himself. The law of moral gravitation in a man's life no more reverses itself suddenly than the law of physical gravitation. When apples begin to fall towards the clouds and Niagara Falls becomes a Niagara leap upwards, then we may look for men to be suddenly changed from murderers into saints. You cannot juggle the immoral elements of a sinner's nature into the moral elements of a saint, any more than you can combine the acid of an unripe lemon and an unripe apple and unripe grape fruit and get the taste of caramel. You cannot combine moral shadows by any sort of manipulation and produce moral sunshine.

The morally transformed life proves the deity of Christ also, because when the sinner turns to Christ he gets the response. Christ invites him and he responds. He calls and Christ answers. He calls to

Mohammed and Mohammed does not come; he calls to Confucius and Confucius does not come. He calls to Buddha and Buddha does not come. He calls to Christ and Christ comes. The whole process is as simple as that. In his outward life a new force begins to work a new design, a new labour working to an end. But especially within is there Another, one with whom there is fellowship, to whom he becomes passionately devoted, whose presence is happiness and whose absence is sorrow, who can sing with full meaning, "How tedious and tasteless the hours, when Jesus no longer I see." Thus, Christ acts upon the soul in experience as God, and manifests all the power of God.

Such a life proves Christ's claim again because intellectual difficulties die in the light of this experience. The mysteries are not all solved. But the difficulties cease to be relevant. Miracles do not trouble him now, because he has a sample of the miracle working power in his own soul. Hume's argument that miracles cannot be true because contrary to experience is exactly reversed and he says miracles are true because they accord precisely with my experience.

He cannot explain ultimately why the morning-glory opens under sunlight and closes under darkness any more than he could before. Nor can he explain life and spirit. He has what is better than explanation of life, life itself.

In particular, he has moral reinforcement. This is the final test of any religion. What can it do with a bad man? None of them can compete with Christ in this respect. Look at Peter, and Saul of Tarsus, and Augustine, and John Bunyan, and George Muller, and S. H. Hadley, and thousands of others. A sense of moral power comes with Christian experience. The

moral heights lift themselves up to the very heavens, but they no longer seem impossible. The spirit of a strong runner enters a man, the spirit and sense of conquest. And the moral transformation follows. There is not a grace or virtue which Christ cannot and has not produced in human character, not all at the same time or in the same person, but all have been produced.

In this way Christ becomes final for the man, final for his reason, final for his conscience, final for his will, final for his intellect, and most of all final for his faith, his hope, his love, his aspiration. Nothing higher can be conceived.

He now understands why the creeds of Christendom all have Christ as their centre. He becomes a judge and critic of other religious systems than the Christian, discerning that their unworkableness is due to their lack of Christ. He understands the perennial and remarkable power of the Scriptures over the human heart as Christ's power. Ten thousand other witnesses around him and a long line of them running back to Christ confirm him in his experience and thus create a spiritual community, the parts of which mutually support each other.

Of course, this experience is convincing to the man who has it and should be to the outside observer. To the latter is presented a new spiritual cosmos, a great system with laws and forces analogous to the physical cosmos. There are not here planets revolving around the Sun, but there are here redeemed souls by the million revolving around a Saviour. There is not a law of physical gravitation acting between bodies directly as the mass and inversely as the square of the distance, but there is a Kingdom of persons whose

law of gravitation is love. There is not a physical law of the transformation of energy pervading this spiritual cosmos, but there is the law of the transfiguration of character, according to which "we all with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord are transfigured into the same image from glory unto glory."

Christ is the only key to this experience. Mr. James, seeking to discredit a certain kind of reasoning from design, says, if you throw a handful of beans on a table, you can, by manipulating the beans, make any sort of figure your design may wish to produce, and so with arguments from design in nature, he says. But he fails to state that the reverse is true. You can manipulate the beans so as to destroy a figure or design already present. Christ is the figure seen in religious experience, in Christian history, in the creeds of Christendom, in the Bible. You cannot get rid of that figure save by manipulating the beans with a destructive purpose.

III. In the third place, Christian experience transfers the whole problem of Christian evidence to the sphere of practical life.

In this phase of it Christianity has a point of contact with the new philosophy of pragmation. The pragmatic philosophy says the ultimate question for every man is, "What shall I do to be saved?" and that the ultimate task of philosophy is not to solve the insoluble riddles of the Universe, but to save men from pessimism. Now Pessimism, says the pragmatist, is just one of the two possible modes of reacting upon or interpreting the total experience of life. The optimist sees grounds for hope; the pessimist does not. The boy who was asked while fishing how many fish

he had caught exemplifies the optimist. Unwilling to confess failure, he replied, "When I catch the one I am after and two more, I'll have three." As an interpreter of experience, he was an adept and would endure the most searching tests of the pragmatic philosophy; it was an instance of a purpose to "create reality."

Now the Christian method throughout is the practical method of answering the question, what must I do to be saved? Its answer is in Christian experience. It says to every man, "You can test the reality and power of Christ practically." It says to every man, you have a "seeing spot" in your soul which will recognize Christ if you submit to Him, just as psychology tells us we all have a blind spot and that if focussed right we cannot see a black mark on a white card with our eyes open, and the card in front of us. Christianity does not say, "Renounce reason," but only waive your speculative difficulties in the interest of your moral welfare.

The Gospel is practical in its methods. The man born blind did not have to accept any theory of Christ, God, or the Universe, neither Monism, nor idealism, nor any special form of theism. One thing only was required, said Christ, "Let me anoint your eyes with clay and you go wash in the pool of Siloam." This he did. His faith worked. It grew by exercise. They plied him with questions and he said, "A man named Jesus healed me." He rose from faith to faith under the guidance and inspiration of Christ until he worshipped Him, and this is the experience of all who put their trust in Him. Of this experience is born the invincible conviction: "One thing I know that whereas I was blind now I see."

XXII

THE GLORY OF JESUS CHRIST*

John 1 : 14—*"We beheld his glory."*

SOME years ago a painter who admired the moral beauty of Christ's character, but who refused to acknowledge that He was divine, resolved to paint Christ's portrait from the evangelical records. For weeks he read these simple Gospels and opened his soul to every suggestion of beauty and moral impulse, permitting himself to be moved and swayed by all the grandeur and radiance of that matchless life, knowing that only thus could he catch and reproduce on canvas the face he would portray. But in this process of sympathetic study of Jesus, his unbelief slowly passed away. First one doubt and then another was consumed, burned up, so to speak, in the flaming splendour of that marvellous life and ere long the painter bowed before Christ in adoration and worship. Like a man who has gazed into a holy mystery, he came forth among his friends, a look of wonder and of praise upon his face, and exclaimed, "I beheld His glory."

Men are denying to-day that Christ is divine. They are seeking to undermine that faith which has healed broken hearts, and has destroyed the power of sin,

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and comforted the dying for two thousand years. It is well that we ask and answer the question, was He what He claimed to be, the divine Son of God and Saviour of the world? My answer must needs be brief and imperfect; for the subject is a vast one and many volumes have been written upon it.

In evidence then of the divinity of Christ, I invite your attention to the threefold glory of Jesus which we have beheld.

I. First, then, we behold His glory in the New Testament records.

If a meteoric stone should fall upon the calm bosom of the sea, the energy of its impact might be measured by the diameter of the circling waves which it would set in motion, when those waves had reached their limit. So the claims of Jesus may be tested by the rôle He enacted while on earth, and by the effects which He produced. Let us study, then, the circling waves of His power in a series of relationships sustained by Him.

Note first His relation to sin. He was Himself sinless. His inner life was a flawless mirror of stainless purity reflecting the image of God. He has challenged criticism for two thousand years to discover a flaw in His character. "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" remains as He spoke it, the unanswered challenge of divine holiness. As has been said, He is the sun on which all the telescopes of time have failed to find a spot.

He was not only sinless. He forgave sin in others. Well did His enemies accuse Him of blasphemy when He pronounced the words to the paralytic, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee," unless indeed and in truth He was God. For God alone can forgive sins.

He transformed sinners. As a sunbeam falls on a mud puddle and draws up a drop of water into the clouds, distils it and purifies it of all foulness and sends it back as a snowflake, even so could He lift up the stained life of a Magdalen and make it white as snow.

He shed His blood for the remission of sins and He declared that remission of sins should be preached in His name to the end of time.

But sin is a violation of law and this relation of sin raises another question, that of His relation to law. And so we find Him claiming to be lawgiver. "He that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them," "Ye have heard it said, but I say unto you," are forms of speech familiar on His lips.

But law suggests a Kingdom and a sceptre and a throne. So we find that He is King of a new Kingdom among men. He claims that His Kingdom shall endure forever and He shall reign in righteousness.

But a Kingdom set up on earth implies control of Providential events. For how shall such a Kingdom survive through the ages unless the ruler can control the course of history? Read the 24th and 25th chapters of Matthew and see how calmly He anticipates the course of history, of earthquakes, and wars and famines and pestilences. Yet He says he that endureth to the end shall be saved, and that He Himself shall come again at the consummation.

Providence, again, is but part of a vaster system of Nature. And we find that He is Lord of Nature. He spoke to the water and it blushed into wine; He spoke to the barren fig-tree and it withered from the roots upward; He spoke to the loaves and fishes and they were multiplied and fed the thousands; He spoke

to the tempest and it was hushed into silence. Nature was His servant. He was its Master.

Towards man He asserts the sublimest claims. He is the object of human faith; for Him all human ties must be severed, if need be; for Him death is to be welcomed. He extends His arms and invites the race to come to Him for peace; "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

How sublime is this rôle enacted by the Nazarene! And to crown it all He claims equality with God. "Before Abraham was, I am," "I and my Father are one." Well has it been said, either Jesus was God, or a bad man. For He claimed to be God.

And how simple the picture in the Gospels, how consistent; how transparent and clear the story! His words about God are like the spontaneous warblings of some strange and wonderful bird. His deeds of power, His miracles of grace, are as sparks emitted by some great fire. Yet how unaffected He is in it all. There is never any attempt at dramatic effect. In the moments of His greatest majesty He is as quiet and as unassuming as the shining of a soft, beaming star. Homer's gods are represented as shaking the heavens by their least act. The poet produces his effects by physical disturbances when his gods stir. Jove gives an affirmative answer to a petitioner and this is Homer's description of it:

"He spoke and awful bends his sable brows,
Shakes his ambrosial curls and gives the nod,
The stamp of fate and sanction of a god
High heaven with trembling the dread signal took
And all Olympus to the centre shook."

Contrast this with the quiet majesty and moral grandeur of Jesus stilling the tempest as He rises from His slumber and says to the rolling billows and raging winds, "Peace, be still." Sometimes He unites in a single act the perfectly human and the perfectly divine in His nature. Humility nestles up by the side of majesty. Grandeur is adorned by lowliness and extremes meet in perfect harmony. He is worn out with toil and asleep on the boat, like any other; and in an instant stills a tempest. He stands weeping at the grave of Lazarus, like any other broken-hearted friend, and at once hurls the voice of command into the tomb and raises the dead to life. He allows Himself to be led away captive by His foes, but restores the severed ear of the High Priest's servant, and says to the impetuous disciple, "Knowest thou not that I could call to my side twelve legions of angels?" He allows Himself to be nailed to the cross and to be laid away in the tomb, and then in undaunted might quietly opens His eyes and lays aside the grave clothes, rises from the dead and ascends to the Father.

Surely we have beheld His glory in these pages, and any man will repeat the painter's experience who allows Christ's image as there portrayed, to have room in his mind and heart. I have read the tragedies of Shakespeare, and awe and horror have fallen upon my spirit at their close; I have gazed upon the Sistine Madonna, that masterpiece of the artistic genius of Raphael, and a sense of beauty has mastered me; I have been swung on shipboard by the mighty rhythmic force of the ocean, and a sense of its power has filled me; I have gazed on a clear night at the dazzling splendour of the Milky Way, and adoration and humility have combined to sway my soul with emotion; I have

stood on the Gorner Grat and, surrounded by cloud-piercing sentinels of snow-clad Alpine peaks keeping guard like tall archangels over diminutive man below, and wonder and awe have oppressed me. But the image of Jesus Christ as it towers in solitary grandeur before me in the New Testament surpasses them all. He inspires me with greater awe than Shakespeare, and greater majesty than ocean or Alps. He is more splendid than the Milky Way, and not afar from me as it is, but near me. And if a human writer invented his picture as recorded in Matthew, then a Galilean peasant wears the literary crown of the ages, and the genius of Raphael and Michelangelo pale into insignificance by the side of His. Nay, as Rousseau says, it would take a Jesus to forge a Jesus. We beheld His glory! We beheld His glory!

II. We beheld His glory in History. The marvel of the ages is the rock of ages. The supremacy of Christ as compared with other teachers in all our civilization of the West is as the supremacy of the giant oak in the midst of a forest of saplings, or as the supremacy of the sun as compared with the planets in our solar system.

Dr. Fairbairn says men have attempted in recent years to get rid of Christ in two ways. One is by critical analysis. They have taken the knife of criticism and with it have cut and slashed at the Gospel records until one of them has said that there are but six or seven authentic sayings of Jesus in the entire New Testament. The other way is by logical analysis. They have tried to show that the decisions of the early Christian councils declaring Jesus to be God are unreasonable and absurd. But when they have completed their destructive work, and done their worst,

there stands Christ towering above the troubled sea of human speculation and doubt like a great and lofty rock at whose solid base the angry waves foam out their rage and dash themselves in vain. There stands Jesus in the firmament of human hope, like a star of the first magnitude, above the multitudes of hungering and sorrowing and sinning humanity, growing larger and brighter and more splendid with each generation, until to-day all over the earth the nations are in commotion as they gaze upward and point with the trembling finger of yearning and hope to Him as the lodestar of their lives.

Look for a moment at His achievements in history. See Him as He moves westward, in the person of the Apostle to the Gentiles. He kindles a flame of faith in the islands of the Mediterranean. He plants His banner at Antioch. He sweeps through Lystria and Derbe, and Asia Minor begins to prostrate herself before Him. He plants His foot in Ephesus and Diana begins to totter from her throne. Restless He crosses the Hellespont and at Philippi, amid the quakings of the earth, He wins trophies. In Athens, amid classic surroundings of Acropolis and Parthenon and chiselled beauties of Phidias and the glories of Praxiteles, His voice is heard calling men to repentance. At length in Rome itself He grapples with the world power. His crown flashes in moral beauty by the side of the Cæsars, His throne rises, mystic, silent and invisible, but mighty in its movements as the silent stars in the bending heavens. When the empire is broken up and barbarians come in hosts sweeping like a conflagration over that ancient empire, He lays His hand on their untamed spirits. Clovis is converted. The Goths are evangelized. The Franks and Gauls and Scandina-

vians come bending to Him; England owns His sway; America, through Cavalier and Puritan and Pilgrim, is founded, and when the feet of these men touch our shores the "sounding isles of the dim woods rang with the anthems of the free," and in praise of the Nazarene.

A humble prophet of Nazareth has done all this. He has done it by the use of a single principle, indeed by means of one despised virtue, self-denial. The cross is the Keystone in the arch of His power. It is a true saying that as chemistry is organized around the principle of affinity; as political economy is based on the single idea of value; as astronomy owes its origin and progress to the one law of gravitation, so Christ founded His religion on the one idea embodied in the cross, dying to live.

See, then, how He dominates the world, not indeed perfectly yet, but with increasing power. Look at the great creeds of Christendom, the Lutheran, the Calvinistic, the Westminster, the Philadelphia, and New Hampshire Confessions of Faith. He is the centre of them all. If you should go through the forest with an axe and cut a ring around the great trees, all of them would die. To take Christ's name from these great creeds would be to do the same for them. They would wither, their leaves lose their life and colour, their sap cease to flow. They would perish.

The church is His monument. She has had a long and checkered career, sometimes persecuted and driven into the wilderness; sometimes unworthy of her high calling, but even to-day she is the fairest among ten thousand institutions, and the chief glory of this earth.

The Lord's Supper, beautiful, impressive memorial

of His death, so simple that any child can understand it, yet so profound in its suggestions of divine love that no philosopher has ever fathomed its mystery to its depths—monument of quenchless love and gentle solicitude on His part, and expressive of tender Love on the part of the disciples, it stretches back through eighteen centuries to Calvary, filled with the aroma of His presence at every step of the way and shining to the eye of faith through the ages, like a chain of roses bedewed with tears of saints, and woven by the hands of angels.

He dominates the greatest art of the world. Go yonder to the Art galleries of Europe. Gaze upon those yards upon yards and furlongs upon furlongs, and miles upon miles of flaming canvas, the very crown and blossom of human genius, and what do you see? His figure, His mother's figure, His brethren's figures, His disciples, His enemies. They portray Him as a babe in Bethlehem, with the light bursting from His infant form; as a boy in the temple; as teacher, as cleanser of temple; as healer; being raised on the cross; being crucified; descending; ascending to glory; judging the world. As I stand there gazing, I interrogate those great Masters, and from their graves I seem to hear the answer from Murillo and Rubens and Raphael and the rest, "It was He," they say, "who touched my brush with celestial fire; His hands mingled the colours, and His spirit inspired mine to its great achievements."

So, too, as I listen to the great Masters of music, to Handel and Haydn and Beethoven, as the billows of harmony roll in upon me and catch me up and sweep me on, as the sublime strains of the "Messiah" take my spirit captive and chain me to the flaming

chariot of triumphant melody, I seem to hear the Master of composition say: "It was His breath through my soul which first fanned the flame of harmony; His hands first smote the chords of my being until they thrilled with the very echoes of heaven."

What shall I say more? He is in our modern life everywhere; in our political economy seeking justice in all industrial conditions; in our politics, seeking to purge it of greed and graft; in our social life; in our literature, shedding a moral radiance over it; in modern missions. He is not yet conqueror, but He presides over the struggle.

"Careless seems the great avenger,
History's pages but record
One death grapple in the darkness
'Twixt false systems and the Word.

"Truth forever on the scaffold,
Wrong forever on the throne,
But that scaffold sways the future,
And behind the dim unknown
Standeth Christ within the shadow
Keeping watch above His own."

III. In the third place we have beheld His glory in the realm of Christian Experience.

His glory shines on the pages of the New Testament. It rises to a new brilliancy as He marches triumphantly through history. But for the individual believer that glory attains to its noon-day splendour in the experience of his own heart.

Christianity adopts the scientific method of demonstration, viz.: the method of experiment. Christian

experience means Christian experiment. Make a trial of Christ, and He will prove to you that He is real, a living Christ doing a divine work in the soul.

We have all seen the triumph of Christ in debased lives, men and women plucked as brands from the burning. They tell us, you know, that a diamond and a piece of charcoal are essentially the same thing, or at least that diamonds were made of charcoal, that in her own mysterious workshop, Nature accomplishes this wonder. That is interesting, but it would be far more interesting if my scientific friend could tell me how *I* can transform charcoals into diamonds. Now this is the glory of Christ. He does just that. Jerry McAuley was a charcoal and Christ changed him into a diamond. S. H. Hadley, the bum, the drunkard and reprobate, was a black piece of charcoal, and so was George Muller of England, who began life as a burglar. Christ touched their lives and made them spiritual jewels fit to adorn His own crown of glory.

Now Christ predicted that He would do just that. He said that men would believe on Him; that prayer in His name would open the gates of Paradise; that a cup of water given in His name would have eternal reward. What a magic name it is to-day in its power to renew human lives! According to the old story, George Washington, while a boy, went into his father's garden one morning in Spring and found to his wonder and delight that his name was growing in a garden bed, spelled out by the plants. His father, of course, had planned the surprise for George. But suppose the father had foretold that hundreds of years later his name, Washington, would be spelled out by growing plants in other garden beds, and suppose the prophecy had come true, then we would conclude that

he was in league with the Cosmos, that he had supernatural power. Now Jesus has done a more wondrous thing. He predicted that His name would be written in human hearts to the end of time, and that that name in the garden of the soul would keep it clean from weeds and briars, and to-day tens of thousands of men and women are witnesses to His power.

Experiment, I say, not in the vainly curious fashion, but in the high aim of moral purpose, is the true test of Christ. Try Him thus, and He will give the proof of His power. The school children will recall the way the books prove that we have a blind spot. Hold a white piece of cardboard, with black marks on it, before the eyes and move it up and down and back and forth until it reaches a given point and the black marks will vanish. Try this and prove it. Now, Christianity says turn the soul towards Christ in all sincerity and suddenly it will appear that you have not a blind but a seeing spot. You will behold His glory. A young woman scientist, who was a sceptic, denied Christ's resurrection. The pastor in the neighbourhood told her to give up speculation and try experiment, offer herself to Christ. She returned soon with radiant face, exclaiming, "I cannot yet prove by argument that Christ arose from the dead, but I know He is alive, for He has come to me and manifested Himself to me." She beheld His glory in the holy place of experience.

Here then is the ground of our confidence. First we believe, because, as Professor James says, we will to believe, or because the Bible tells us to believe, or because some friend witnesses to us of Christ's power. But at length we believe because of what He does in us and for us. That is the reason why destructive

criticism cannot fundamentally shake our confidence in the Bible. In it we find reflected our own experience. If I look into a mirror which changes or distorts my face, I know it is an untrue mirror; but if it gives me back my image truly, I know the mirror is true. Such a mirror is the Bible. It reflects truly my spiritual image.

Blind Bartimæus of Jericho was healed by Jesus, and Dr. Dale has suggested that conceivably his faith at first was based on the healing of the man born blind in Jerusalem, of which he had heard. Imagine a doubter seeking to destroy his faith by calling in question the story of the man in Jerusalem who was healed. "The story looks suspicious," says the sceptic. "Why did Jesus put clay on the man's eyes and send him off to wash in a pool? There must have been fraud somewhere." What answer would Bartimæus have given to such a doubter? He would have pointed to his own eyes. He would have declared, as the other declared, "Whereas I was blind, now I see." I see the fair forms of nature and they all tell me I am no longer blind, the daisies that blossom at my feet—they tell as I gaze at their beauty that I am no longer blind; the white blossoms on the trees, the bloom on the grapes, and the hues of the pomegranate; the blue haze on yonder mountain, the fiery splendour of yonder evening cloud, and at night those burning stars above—these all are my witnesses—the faces of my friends which I now see, of my brothers and sisters, and the dear face of my mother—these all are my witnesses—all this beautiful wondrous earth of God's, fashioned by His fingers, they proclaim my testimony. Yes, yes, I believe, not because of what Jesus did to some one else, but because of what He has done to

me, that He is the divine Son of God. I have beheld His glory with the eyes to which He unlocked the gates of light, and bade me enter.

This, then, is the witness of experience and every believer knows what it is in some measure. I went to Him in my bondage and sin and He broke off the shackles and set me free; I went to Him in doubt and perplexity and the light of day fell on my darkened path; in the lonely night of sorrow when friends and helpers failed me, He came into my life and bound up my broken heart. In doubt and despair and dread of the future, He gives me life and hope. We have seen His glory, then, on the pages of the New Testament record. It has flashed before us through eighteen centuries of history, as the rider on the white horse went forth conquering and to conquer. That glory has also shone within us, and we see it in the lives of others. We have seen it as it breaks forth in the faces of the dying, who in His name greet death with a triumphant shout, and we seem to catch it in the notes of the redeemed host above who sing His praises and who proclaim that they owe their victory to Him, and shall spend eternity in telling it.

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